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Deal Dash



Black Friday Shopping a Little Less Frenzied

Alex and Lisa Hardman carry a television after purchasing it at a Best Buy location in Dartmouth, Mass., early Friday, Nov. 28, 2014. The couple had waited in line for several hours for the store to open at 1 a.m. for Black Friday holiday shopping. (AP Photo/The Standard-Times, Peter Pereira)

ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
MAE ANDERSON
AP Business Writers
NEW YORK (AP) — Black

Friday seemed a little less crazy this year. There were squabbles here and there, and elbows

got thrown, but the Friday morning crowds appeared smaller than usual and less frenzied, in part because

many Americans took advantage of stores' earlier opening hours to get started on their major shopping

on Thanksgiving Day.

Continued on page 32



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UK's Cameron to curb benefits for immigrants

JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Migrants from Europe will have to leave Britain if they don't get a job within six months, and must work for four years before receiving some benefits, Prime Minister David Cameron announced Friday, in a carefully balanced speech designed to defuse domestic criticism of his immigration policies while averting a showdown

with the European Union. Immigration has become an increasingly bitter issue in Britain since the 2008 economic crisis sparked recession and government spending cuts.

The right-wing U.K. Independence Party has gained growing support with calls to curb migration and leave the EU, which allows citizens of its 28 countries to live and work across the bloc. Cam-

eron has promised to wrest more control from the EU, but any attempt to cap the number of immigrants would be unacceptable to other members.

He stopped short of calling for a cap Friday, saying Britain supports freedom of movement, but it is not "an unqualified right."

He said EU migrants who had not found a job within six months "will be required to leave," and new arrivals

would not be able to claim tax credits and child benefits until they had been in Britain for four years.

"Immigration benefits Britain, but it needs to be controlled," Cameron said.

He vowed to get the EU to accept reforms before holding a referendum on Britain's membership in 2017. The speech was relatively conciliatory in tone, and EU Commission spokesman Margaritis Schinas said

Cameron's ideas should be studied "without drama." Several other EU countries already have taken measures against immigrants who claim benefits without seeking work. "It is up to national lawmakers to fight against abuses of the system, and the EU law allows for this," Schinas said. But UKIP leader Nigel Farage said it was the speech of a "scared" politician "realizing he is out of touch." □

Pope urges more Muslim opposition to IS in Turkey

NICOLE WINFIELD

SUZAN FRASER

Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Pope Francis urged Muslim leaders to condemn the "barbaric violence" being committed in Islam's name against religious minorities in Iraq and Syria as he arrived in neighboring Turkey Friday for a delicate visit aimed at improving interfaith ties.

Francis sought to offer a balanced message as he met with Turkish political and religious officials at the start of his second trip to the Middle East this year. He reaffirmed that military force was justified to halt the Islamic State group's advance, and called for greater dialogue between Christians,

Muslims and people of all faiths to end fundamentalism.

"As religious leaders, we are obliged to denounce all violations against human dignity and human



Pope Francis is welcomed by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Presidential palace in Ankara, Friday, Nov. 28, 2014. Pope Francis arrived in Turkey on Friday at a sensitive moment for the Muslim nation, as it cares for 1.6 million refugees and weighs how to deal with the Islamic State group as its fighters grab chunks of Syria and Iraq across Turkey's southern border.

(AP Photo/Gregorio Borgia)

rights," Francis told Mehmet Gormez, Turkey's top cleric and other religious officials gathered at the government-run Religious Affairs Directorate. "As such, any violence which seeks reli-

gious justification warrants the strongest condemnation because the omnipotent is the God of life and peace."

Francis condemned the "barbaric violence" by IS

against Christians, Yazidis and other religious minorities and the destruction of their places of worship.

The Vatican has voiced particular concern about the expulsion of Christians

from communities that have had a Christian presence for 2,000 years and has demanded that they be allowed to return home in safety once the conflict settles.

Francis' three-day visit to the Muslim nation comes at a sensitive moment for Turkey, as it struggles to cope with 1.6 million refugees fleeing the IS advance in Syria and weighs how to respond to U.S. calls to get more engaged with the international coalition fighting the extremists.

Turkey has accused the group of casting a shadow over Islam and has said Muslim countries have a duty to stand up against its radical views.

But Turkey is still negotiating with the United States over helping the coalition, pressing for a safe haven and a no-fly zone along the Syrian border with Turkey and demanding the coalition go after Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime. □

Nearly 600 migrants get temporary shelter on Crete

IERAPETRA, Greece (AP) —

Nearly 600 migrants, mostly refugees from Syria, have been temporarily put up in a basketball arena in the southern Cretan town of Ierapetra, where they arrived in a crippled smuggling ship after more than a week at sea.

Red Cross volunteers on Friday issued warm meals and clothing to the 80 children, 150 women and 361 men who were on the 77-meter (250-foot) Baris freighter,

which was towed to Ierapetra Thursday, two days after losing engine power off Crete.

About two-thirds of the migrants are Syrians, who qualify for refugee status, while the others include Kurds, Afghans and Palestinians, officials said.

"These are lower to middle class people who were seeking a better life, due to the war in their country," said Argyris Pantazis, Ierapetra's deputy mayor for

civil protection.

He said the Syrian refugees will probably leave the arena within the next two days. The other migrants, who do not immediately qualify for refugee status, will be given the option to return to their country voluntarily or be interned in camps pending deportation.

"Nobody should be in the position these people are in, but as that's the way it is we are doing everything

in our power to help them," said Nikolaos Polychronakis, a Red Cross volunteer organizer from the nearby town of Aghios Nikolaos.

"They are settling in quite well."

There are many families but we have milk, baby formula and nappies for the small children," he said.

The migrants left Turkey last week, and had paid smugglers between \$2,000 and \$6,000 to be taken to Italy. It was one of the largest

single crossings of its kind in recent years. Tens of thousands of people fleeing war and poverty in Africa and the Middle East risk the journey to Europe every year in usually unseaworthy craft ranging from dinghies to aging rust-buckets. Most end up in Italy, although Greece is also a major entry point.

Greek authorities have arrested seven crew members of the Baris and two suspected smugglers. □

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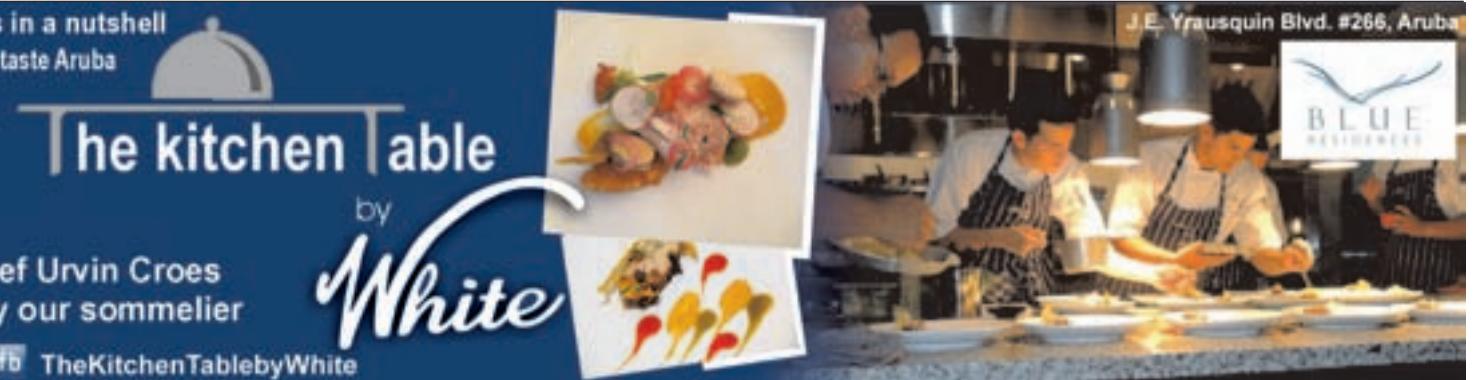
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NYC panel nears decision on police chokehold death

TOM HAYS

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A panel in New York City is quietly nearing its own conclusion about a case involving the death of an unarmed black man at the hands of police, amid the fallout from a grand jury's decision in the fatal police shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Missouri.

The grand jury that began investigating the chokehold death of Eric Garner in September heard last week from what was believed to be its final witness — the New York Police Department officer seen on a widely watched amateur video showing him wrapping his arm around Garner's neck. Before the end of the year, authorities are expected to announce whether the officer will face criminal charges in a case that sparked outrage and grabbed headlines before it was overshadowed by the killing of the unarmed Brown in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson.

New York City authorities say they're already taking steps to avoid a repeat of the violent protests that broke out in Ferguson this week when a grand jury decided a white police officer shouldn't face charges in Brown's Aug. 9 shooting. The Garner case stems from a July 17 confrontation between Officer Daniel Pantaleo and other NYPD officers who stopped him on suspicion of selling loose, untaxed cigarettes. The video shot by an onlooker shows the 43-year-old Garner telling the officers to leave him alone and refusing to be handcuffed.

Pantaleo, who is white, responded by putting Garner in an apparent chokehold, which is banned under NYPD policy. □

Ferguson protests move to retail stores

JIM SALTER

Associated Press

FERGUSON, Missouri (AP)

— Demonstrators sought to catch the attention of shoppers looking for good deals on Friday, going to major retailers around the St. Louis area to speak out about a grand jury's deci-

about two dozen people chanted "no justice, no peace, no racist police" and "no more Black Friday" after police moved them out of a Wal-Mart. Officers warned the protesters risked arrest if they didn't move at least 50 feet from the store's entrance,

nouncement that Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson wouldn't be indicted for fatally shooting Brown in August, protests have occurred in Ferguson and across the country. A dozen buildings and some cars were torched in Ferguson on Monday night

dollar today," she said. "As long as black lives are put second to materialism, there will be no peace."

Malcolm London, a leader in the Black Youth Project 100, which has been organizing Chicago protests, said group is trying to rally support for other issues,



Eugene Gillis plays Christmas carols on his trumpet Friday, Nov. 28, 2014, along a section of West Florissant Avenue that saw heavy damage on Monday in Ferguson, Mo. The section of road has been closed, but reopened Friday, after many business were damaged after a grand jury decided not to indict a Ferguson police officer in the shooting death of Michael Brown.

(AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)

sion not to indict the white police officer who fatally shot Michael Brown, an unarmed black 18-year-old. Other protests were planned at shopping centers around the nation, though attendance was seemingly sparse aside from in Chicago, where about 200 people gathered near the city's Magnificent Mile shopping district.

Early Friday in the St. Louis suburb of Manchester,

then began advancing in unison until the protesters moved further into the parking lot. The mostly black group of protesters chanted in the faces of the officers — most of whom were white — as shoppers looked on.

"We want to really let the world know that it is no longer business as usual," said Chenjerai Kumanyika, an assistant professor at Clemson University.

Since Monday night's an-

and dozens were arrested, but the protests have grown more peaceful as the week went on.

In a plaza near Chicago's historic water tower, Kristiana Colon, 28, said Friday was "a day of awareness and engagement." She's a member of the Let Us Breathe Collective, which has been taking supplies such as gas masks to protesters in Ferguson.

"We want them to think twice before spending that

such as more transparency from Chicago police.

"We are not indicting a man. We are indicting a system," London told the crowd. Other planned events around the country seemed relatively brief and thinly attended in contrast to the large demonstrations earlier this week. In Brooklyn, New York, a "Hands Up, Don't Shop" protest had been scheduled, but no one materialized. □

More than 100 rounds fired in brazen Austin shooting

JIM VERTUNO

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A gunman attempted to set the Mexican Consulate in Austin ablaze and fired more than 100 rounds at downtown buildings early Friday before he died, authorities said. Austin police identified the shooter as Larry McQuilliams, 49. They said he had a criminal record but didn't elaborate. Investigators were trying to determine his motives after he began shooting at the consulate, Austin police headquarters, the U.S. courthouse and other locations. Some of the buildings are near the popular Sixth Street entertainment district, where bars close at 2 a.m., about the same time the shootings began Friday. Police Chief Art Acevedo noted that thousands of people are typically on the street at that time. "Many, many rounds were fired in



Police tape marks off the scene after authorities shot and killed a man who they say opened fire on the Mexican Consulate, police headquarters and other downtown buildings early Friday, Nov. 28, 2014, in Austin, Texas. The gunman fired more than 100 rounds at downtown buildings early Friday before he died, Austin authorities said.

(AP Photo/Claudia Y Hernandez)

downtown Austin," Acevedo said. "With all the people on the streets, we're very fortunate. I give

thanks that no one but the suspect is injured or deceased." Mexico's Foreign Relations Department

issued a statement expressing "profound concern and condemnation" of the attack, but also said "there

is no evidence the shots were exclusively directed at our facility." Acevedo said a sergeant who was holding the reins of two police horses after his patrol shot the gunman just outside the main entrance to police headquarters. But Acevedo said it's not clear if police fatally shot the suspect or if he took his own life.

The entire incident lasted about 10 minutes from the first call, Acevedo said.

Officers approached McQuilliams after he had been shot, but noticed cylinders in his vehicle, which was nearby, and discovered he was wearing a vest they thought may be rigged to explode. Officers retreated and a bomb squad was called. It was later determined the items were not explosive.

The fire at the consulate was extinguished before any significant damage was done to the building. □

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Political Pork:

New Jersey pig bill has presidential implications

JILL COLVIN

Associated Press

NEWARK, New Jersey (AP)

— New Jersey Republican Gov. Chris Christie has vetoed a piece of legislation seen by many as a gauge of his presidential ambitions — a bill involving pig cages.

The bill would have banned pig farmers in the state from using devices called gestation crates, which are metal cages so small pregnant pigs can't turn around. On Friday, Christie called the legislation "a 'solution in search of a problem.'

The contraptions are rarely used on New Jersey's 300 pig farms, but they're widespread in Iowa, a key state in presidential contests because it kicks off the primary races to choose nominees. Christie, who is seriously considering a run in 2016, has invested significant time into building relationships in Iowa, including with Republican Gov. Terry Branstad, who had urged Christie to veto the legislation.

Christie has showed signs of rebounding from a New Jersey traffic scandal that badly tainted his brand earlier in the year. As the head of the Republican Governors Association, Christie played a leading role in his party's victories in the Nov. 4 midterm elections, raising tens of millions of dollars to help elect Republican governors.



Sarah Swingle, of Charleston, S.C., with the Humane Society of the United States, stands immobilized in a human-sized "gestation crate," in front of the Statehouse, in Trenton, N.J. Swingle's demonstration was part of the society's efforts to have Gov. Chris Christie sign legislation that would require state agriculture officials to adopt regulations concerning confinement of pregnant pigs. Christie has until Monday, Dec. 1, 2014, to decide whether to sign the bill.

(AP Photo/Mel Evans)

He recently handed over the RGA position, which has responsibilities that would conflict with the presidential primary season.

However, Christie is just one name in a crowded field of potential Republican candidates. While Hillary Rodham Clinton remains the Democratic front-runner should she seek the presidency, there is no early favorite among the Republicans.

Animal rights advocates say the gestation crate practice is cruel. To try to sway Christie, they launched a public relations blitz, complete with celebrity endorsements and staged events where activists stand inside cages.

Dave Warner, a spokesman for the National Pork Producers Council, had sent a lobbyist to the state to try to scuttle the bill. □

US appeals WTO ruling against national meat labels

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States is appealing a World Trade Organization decision that would make it harder for U.S. consumers to know where meat in the grocery store came from.

The WTO in October rejected U.S. rules requiring labels on packaged steaks, ribs and other cuts of meat identifying where the ani-

mals were born, raised and slaughtered. The WTO said the "country of origin labeling" requirements put Canadian and Mexican livestock at a disadvantage.

On Friday, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative appealed the ruling. U.S. farmers who compete with Mexican and Canadian ranchers welcomed the appeal. National Farm-

ers Union President Roger Johnson on Friday called it "the right thing to do for American family farmers, ranchers and consumers." But meatpackers oppose the labeling requirements, saying they impose costly paperwork.

Originally, the U.S. Department of Agriculture allowed the labels to say simply "Product of U.S." or "Product of U.S. and Can-

ada." The WTO rejected that approach in 2012. So USDA made the labels more specific in an attempt to win WTO approval. For example, they can say the animal that produced the meat was "born in Mexico, raised and slaughtered in the United States" or "born, raised and slaughtered in the United States." But in October, the WTO also rejected the revised rules. □



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US evangelicals with gay children challenge church

RACHEL ZOLL
AP Religion Writer

Rob and Linda Robertson did what they believed was expected of them as good Christians.

When their 12-year-old son Ryan said he was gay, they told him they loved him, but he had to change. He entered "reparative therapy," met regularly with his pastor and immersed himself in Bible study and his church youth group. After six years, nothing changed. A despondent Ryan cut off from his parents and his faith, started taking drugs and in 2009, died of an overdose. "Now we realize we were so wrongly taught," said Rob Robertson, a firefighter who lives in Washington state. "It's a horrible, horrible mistake the church has made."

The tragedy could have easily driven the Robertsons from the church. But instead of breaking with evangelicism—as many parents in similar circumstances have done—the couple is taking a different approach, and they're inspiring other Christians in the United States with gay children to do the

same. They are staying in the church and, in protesting what they see as the demonization of their sons and daughters, presenting a new challenge to Christian leaders trying to hold off growing acceptance of same-sex relationships.

It's not clear how much of an impact these parents can have. Evangelicals tend to dismiss fellow believers who accept same-sex relationships as no longer Christian. The parents have only recently started finding each other online and through faith-oriented organizations for gays and lesbians such as the Gay Christian Network, The Reformation Project and The Marin Foundation.

But Linda Robertson, who with Rob attends a non-denominational evangelical church and blogs about her son at justbecausehebreathes.com, said a private Facebook page she started last year for evangelical mothers of gays has more than 300 members. High-profile cases of prominent Christian parents embracing their gay children indicate a change is occur-

ring beyond a few isolated families.

James Brownson, a New Testament scholar at Western Theological Seminary

came out at age 18. Chester Wenger, a retired missionary and pastor with the Mennonite Church USA, lost his clergy credentials

won the case and kept his clergy credentials, becoming a hero for gay marriage supporters within and outside the church.



Linda and Rob Robertson visit the grave of their son, Ryan, in Issaquah, Wash. The couple, evangelical Christians, brought their son to "reparative therapy" when he came out to them as gay. His sexual orientation didn't change, and he became addicted to drugs and eventually died of an overdose. The Robertsons are now dedicated to helping other evangelical parents accept their gay children.

(AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

in Michigan, last year published the book "Bible, Gender, Sexuality," advocating a re-examination of what Scripture says about same-sex relationships. His son

this fall after officiating at his son's marriage to another man. In a statement urging the church to accept gays and lesbians, Wenger noted the pain his family experienced when a church leader excommunicated his son three decades ago without any discussion with Wenger and his wife.

The Rev. Danny Cortez, pastor of New Heart Community Church, a Southern Baptist congregation in California, was already moving toward recognizing same-sex relationships when his teenage son came out. When Cortez announced his changed outlook to his congregation this year, they voted to keep him. The national denomination this fall cut ties with the church. In the United Methodist Church, two ministers with gay sons drew national attention for separately presiding at their children's same-sex weddings despite a church prohibition against doing so: The Rev. Thomas Ogletree, a former dean of the Yale Divinity School, ultimately was not disciplined by the church, while the Rev. Frank Schaefer went through several church court hearings. He

Kathy Baldock, a Christian who advocates for gay acceptance through her website CanyonwalkerConnections.com, said evangelical parents are speaking out more because of the example set by their children. Gay and lesbian Christians have increasingly been making the argument they can be attracted to people of the same gender and remain faithful to God, whether that means staying celibate or having a committed same-sex relationship. The annual conference of the Gay Christian Network has grown from 40 people a decade ago to an expected 1,400 for the next event in January.

The collapse of support for "reparative therapy" is also a factor, said Susan Shopland, the daughter of a Presbyterian missionary who, along with her gay son, is active with the Gay Christian Network. In June of last year, Alan Chambers, the leader of Exodus International, a ministry that tried to help conflicted Christians repress same-sex attraction, apologized for the suffering the ministry caused and said the group would close down. □



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Homeless woman's stun gun spurs 2nd Amendment case

DENISE LAVOIE

AP Legal Affairs Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Jaime Caetano was beaten so badly by her ex-boyfriend that she ended up in the hospital. So when a friend offered her a stun gun to protect herself, she took it. Caetano, who is homeless, never had to use it but now finds herself at the center of a contentious Second Amendment case headed to the highest court in Massachusetts.

The Supreme Judicial Court is being asked to decide whether a state law that prohibits private citizens from possessing stun guns infringes on their right to keep and bear arms. In an unusual twist, the court is also being asked to examine whether the Second Amendment right to defend yourself in your own home applies in the case of a homeless person.

Arguments before the court are scheduled Tuesday.

Police found Caetano's stun gun in her purse during a shoplifting investigation at a supermarket in 2011. She told police she needed it to defend herself against her violent ex-boyfriend, against whom she had obtained multiple restraining orders.

During her trial, Caetano, 32, testified that her ex-boyfriend repeatedly came to her workplace and threatened her.

One night, she showed him the stun gun and he "got scared and left me alone," she said.

She was found guilty of violating the state law that bans private possession of stun guns, devices that deliver an electric shock when pressed against an attacker.

In her appeal, her lawyer, Benjamin Keehn, argues that a stun gun falls within

the meaning of "arms" under the Second Amendment.

Keehn wrote in a legal brief that the state's ban "cannot be squared with the fundamental right to keep and bear arms." He also argues that self-defense outside the home is part of the core right provided by the Second Amendment. Massachusetts is among only five states that ban stun guns and Tasers for private citizens, said Eugene Volokh, a constitutional law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, who has written extensively about Second Amendment issues.

The devices are used by law enforcement agencies around the country.

A ban in Michigan was overturned in 2012 after the state appeals court ruled that a total prohibition was unconstitutional under the Second Amendment and the Michigan Constitution. Volokh said the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms for self-defense "necessarily includes the right to do so outside one's home."

"Given that the Second Amendment secures a right aimed in large part at self-defense, we have to recognize that often people need to defend themselves in public," Volokh said. "So it's especially important that people have some useful device that would be effective in defending themselves outside the home."

Commonwealth Second Amendment, a Massachusetts-based group that filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case, argued that stun guns are a "logical option" for people who do not want to use deadly force for self-defense.

"Let's face it, not every-



A police officer is dwarfed amid the marble columns of the Supreme Court in Washington. The Supreme Judicial Court is being asked to decide whether a state law that prohibits private citizens from possessing stun guns infringes on their right to keep and bear arms.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

body who has a need for self-defense would necessarily be comfortable car-

rying a firearm," said Brent Carlton, the group's president and co-founder.

Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan declined to comment on the case.



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Islamists hold small protests in Egypt, 5 killed

MAGGIE MICHAEL

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egyptian security forces quickly put down scattered protests Friday as an attempt by Islamists to hold the first major anti-government rallies in months fizzled, with at least two protesters and three army and navy officers killed in separate incidents.

The call for nationwide rallies to topple the government marked the first attempt in months to hold large protests in the face

of a massive crackdown since the military's ouster last year of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi. Several mosques listed as gathering points by organizers remained largely empty. Small, scattered demonstrations by a few hundred protesters were quickly quashed by security forces.

The three military officers were killed in separate shootings early Friday morning. The army officers were shot dead in Cairo while the navy officer was

killed in Alexandria. After Friday prayers, two civilians were killed in the eastern Cairo neighborhood of Matariya, where security forces clashed with protesters, according to the Health Ministry.

Security forces had vowed to use "lethal force" and maintained a heavy presence from the early morning. Armored vehicles deployed across the city while cement blocks sealed off roads leading to security headquarters, the presidential palace, the Ministry

of Defense and the main Cathedral. Army helicopters hovered overhead.

Friday sermons by government-appointed clerics spoke against demonstrations. In a Cairo sermon aired on state TV, an imam said: "Don't do it ... You can't fix corruption by sabotage, terrorizing safe people, and shedding blood." While previous demonstrations by Morsi supporters have played down their Islamist nature — focusing instead on opposing his overthrow and restor-

ing Egyptian democracy — the calls for Friday's protests were overtly religious. The ultraconservative Salafi group organizing the rallies warned of a war against Islam and urged protesters to raise Qurans in the air. The theme of the demonstrations was "Muslim Youth Uprising."

Salafi Front spokesman Hisham Kamal said, "this is only a beginning" and added that turnout was satisfactory if compared to "stagnant water" of the past period. □

Afghan official: Attack on army base kills at least 6

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) —

Insurgents killed six Afghan soldiers in an assault on an army base Friday that lasted more than 14 hours, a day after attacks on foreign targets in Kabul killed two British embassy employees.

Nearly 30 insurgents, including seven suicide bombers, swarmed Camp Bastion in southern Helmand province in the early hours of Friday morning, said the deputy head of the Afghan National Army in the province, Ghulam Farooq Parwani. British forces handed over Camp Bastion to the Afghan army in late October as part of a transition that will see the U.S. and NATO combat mission end on Dec. 31. The Taliban claimed responsibility for Friday's attack.

Also in Helmand Friday, two police officers were killed and two wounded in a suicide attack on their vehicle in Nawzad district, local police spokesman

Ahmad Obaid said. In eastern Nangahar prov-

prayers, said Niamatullah Noorzai the chief of vola-

The Afghan government's support for a continued



An Afghan soldier stands guard inside a mosque after a bomb explosion in Khogyani district of Nangahar province east of Kabul, Afghanistan, Friday, Nov. 28, 2014. An Afghan official says six Afghan soldiers have been killed in an attack on a military base in the southern Helmand province that lasted more than 14 hours. In Nangahar province, an official says 31 people were wounded when a mosque was bombed during Friday prayers.

(AP Photo)

ince, 31 people were wounded when a mosque was bombed during Friday

file Khogyani district. No one claimed responsibility for the attack.

international military presence has incensed the insurgents, who are intensi-

fying their war against the administration of President Ashraf Ghani.

Immediately after his September inauguration, Ghani signed bilateral security agreements with the U.S. and NATO, and he has made clear his intention to bring peace to Afghanistan, which has been at war for the past 30 years. Kabul has seen almost daily attacks in recent weeks, as insurgents turn their attention to foreign targets. On Thursday, a suicide attacker in a car filled with explosives struck a British embassy vehicle on a busy road in the east of the capital, killing a British security guard and an Afghan driver.

Late Friday evening, a complex attack, also claimed by the Taliban, was launched against a guesthouse occupied by a U.S. logistics contractor, Aecom Technology Corporation, according to police and security officials. □

Israel FM supports paying Arabs to leave country

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's hard-line foreign minister says he supports paying Arab citizens to leave the country.

In a manifesto of his Yisrael Beiteinu party published Friday, Avigdor Lieberman says he favors ceding Arab majority areas in northern Israel to a future Palestinian state and providing economic incentives for Arab-Israelis

— about 20 percent of Israel's population of 8 million — to encourage them to emigrate.

The manifesto does not set out positions on the most difficult issues in the Israel-Palestinian conflict, including the status of Jerusalem, the future of Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Israel's borders. But it does acknowledge

the necessity of territorial compromise for reaching a peace deal with the Palestinians, and also with moderate Arab countries. Once a close associate of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Lieberman is now seen as harboring prime ministerial ambitions himself.

His offer to pay Israeli Arabs to leave comes as Netanyahu pushes forward

with a contentious parliamentary bill to formalize Israel's status as a Jewish state — a measure that many Arab-Israelis say will institutionalize their status as second class citizens.

The bill, which Netanyahu says is necessary to safeguard Israel's future, is opposed by a wide range of Israeli political figures, including the largely ceremonial president, but is

strongly supported by right wing members of his ruling coalition, including Lieberman.

Meanwhile, Israeli security forces fired tear gas at several dozen rock-throwing demonstrators at the Qalandiya checkpoint north of Jerusalem following weekly prayers Friday. There were no immediate reports of injuries or arrests. □

US-backed rebels push forward in southern Syria

BASSEM MROUE

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian rebels backed by the United States are making their biggest gains yet south of the capital Damascus, capturing a string of towns from government forces and aiming to carve out a swath of territory leading to the doorstep of President Bashar Assad's seat of power.

The advances appear to be a rare visible success story from efforts by the U.S. and its allies to train and arm moderate rebel fighters.

The rebel forces are believed to include fighters who graduated from a nearly 2-year-old CIA training program based in Syria's southern neighbor Jordan. The group known as the Friends of Syria, including Jordan, France the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, are backing the rebels with money and weapons, said Gen. Ibrahim Jbawi, the spokesman for the Free Syrian Army's southern front.

The gains are a contrast to northern Syria, where U.S.-backed rebels are collapsing in the face of an assault by Islamic militants. Notably, in the south, the rebels are working together with fighters from al-Qaida's Syria branch, whose battle-hardened militants have helped them gain the momentum against government forces. The cooperation points to the difficulty in American efforts to build up "moderate" factions while isolating extremists.

"The goal is to reach the capital ... because there is no way to bring down the regime without reaching Damascus," said Ahmad al-Masalmeh, an opposition activist in Daraa.

But few are under the illusion that the offensive in the south can loosen Assad's grip on power in the near future. The Syrian leader has benefited from the U.S.-led coalition's war against the Islamic State group, which has had the side effect of freeing up Assad's forces to focus



Syrian rebels pray in front of their tank at al Mutayia village in the southern province of Daraa, Syria. Syrian rebels backed by the United States are making their biggest gains yet south of the capital Damascus, capturing a string of towns from government forces and aiming to carve out a swath of territory leading to the doorstep of President Bashar Assad's seat of power.

(AP Photo/SRABA)

on more moderate rebels elsewhere in the country. Government forces have seized several key areas around the capital.

Jbawi said the international support for the assault "is not enough to let the reb-

els win the battle militarily. They are backing (us) to pressure Bashar Assad's regime to bring him to the negotiating table."

The Islamic State group's onslaught in Syria and Iraq has given greater urgency

to international efforts to find some sort of solution for Syria's conflict, which has killed more than 200,000 people and displaced millions. Previous attempts and two rounds of peace talks in Switzerland ear-

lier this year failed to make any progress as each side remained convinced it could win the war militarily. The U.N. envoy to Syria, Staffan de Mistura, has now proposed local cease-fires starting with the northern city of Aleppo as a building block for a wider solution — an idea that Assad has said is "worth studying."

Speaking by telephone, Jbawi said 54 rebel factions consisting of 30,000 fighters are taking part in the battles in southern Syria. Activists say that Jordan is also facilitating the rebels' push by arming some rebels and allowing them to cross freely to and from the country.

The rebel offensive gained momentum two months ago, leading to the capture of much of the Quneitra region bordering Syria's Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, as well as large areas in the southern province of Daraa on the border with Jordan. □

Inside Kobani: Devastation mixed with optimism

KOBANI, Syria (AP) —

Blocks of low-rise buildings with hollow facades, shattered concrete, streets strewn with rubble and overturned, crumpled remains of cars and trucks. Such is the landscape in Kobani, where the sounds of rifle and mortar fire resonate all day long in fighting between Islamic State extremists and the Syrian town's Kurdish defenders.

Kurdish fighters peek through sand-bagged positions, firing at suspected militant positions. Female fighters in trenches move quickly behind sheets strung up to block the view of snipers. Foreign jets circle overhead.

An exclusive report shot by a videojournalist inside Kobani offered a rare, in-depth glimpse of the horrendous destruction that more than two months of fighting has inflicted on the Kurdish town in northern Syria by the Turkish border. There, Kurdish fighters backed by small num-



A Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) fighter shows the extent of the damage from a truck bomb in Kobani, Syria. Here, Kurdish fighters backed by small numbers of Iraqi peshmerga forces and Syrian rebels, are battling what they see as an existential battle against the militants who swept into their town in mid-September as part of a summer blitz that saw the group seize large chunks of territory in Syria and neighboring Iraq.

(AP Photo/Jake Simkin)

bers of Iraqi peshmerga forces and Syrian rebels, are locked in what they see as an existential battle against the militants, who swept into their town in mid-September as part of a summer blitz after the Islamic State group overran large parts of Syria and neighboring Iraq. Helped by more than 270

airstrikes from a U.S.-led coalition and an American air-drop of weapons, the Kurds have succeeded in halting the militants' advance and now believe that a corner has been turned.

Several fighters with the YPG, the main Kurdish fighting force, spoke confidently of a coming victory. Jamil Marzuka, a senior

commander, said the fighting has "entered a new phase" in the last week.

"We can tell everyone, not just those on the front lines, that we are drawing up the necessary tactics and plans to liberate the city," he said.

A YPG fighter, who identified himself only by his first name, Pozul, said only small pockets of militants remain. Still, he said he and other fighters must remain wary as they move around because Islamic State snipers lurk amid the ruins and the militants have booby-trapped buildings they left behind.

"They are scattered so as to give us the impression that there are a lot of them, but there are not," he said. The Kurds' claims of imminent victory may be overly ambitious. But the AP's reporting has found that the Islamic State group's drive has at least been blunted. Hundreds of militants have been killed, most of them by airstrikes. □

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Prominent Hong Kong student protest leader Joshua Wong talks to reporters outside a court in Hong Kong. Wong and other democracy protesters were arrested during a police operation to remove barricades from a protest camp in the unruly Mong Kok district. Wong was given bail and his case adjourned until January 14.

(AP Photo/Vincent Yu)

Profiles:

Unlikely teen leader of Hong Kong protests

KELVIN CHAN
Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — At age 14, he stepped into the spotlight to take on — and ultimately help defeat — Hong Kong authorities' plans to launch a "national education" curriculum, calling it a ploy to brainwash the city's youth with unquestioned support for the Chinese Communist Party.

Now, at 18, Joshua Wong is helping spearhead a mostly student-led protest movement that is pressing for greater democratic reforms in the semiautonomous Chinese territory.

Slender and serious, with a shock of shaggy black hair, Wong does not cut an imposing figure. He usually wears black eyeglasses and is often seen hunched over his smartphone — a key tool used by the young protesters to get their message out via social media and group chats.

Yet he carries himself with a maturity found in few teenagers and speaks concisely and with conviction while addressing crowds, microphone in hand. He is admired among supporters for being willing to speak up — and doing so articulately — at such a young age. "He's outstanding in leading the mass movement," said Terry Ng, an insurance agent in his 30s who has joined some protests. Wong has a power to inspire and get people to think critically about government policy, said Angel Chow, an 18-year-old high school student.

"He's very young and he can lead a large amount of people to have a protest to the government," she said. "It is not an easy job, I think."

Wong has plenty of detractors. He has been attacked by pro-Beijing media in the city, including an article in the Wen Wei Po newspaper

accusing him of working for the CIA.

This week, he and his lawyer were pelted with eggs by two men after he was arrested for a second time since the street protests began two months ago.

Wong, Lester Shum, another popular student leader, and about 150 others were detained Wednesday when police cleared out a protest site in the gritty Mong Kok neighborhood where demonstrators had often clashed with police, as well as angry residents. A Hong Kong court on Thursday banned him from going to that area. After paying HK\$500 (\$65) in bail, he was released and his obstruction case was adjourned until Jan. 14.

On leaving court, Wong showed journalists small cuts and bruises on his neck that he said came from police hitting him.

Continued on Page 27

AP: Violence in China continued despite government crackdown

DIDI TANG

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese authorities say in a six-month report card on their security crackdown in Xinjiang that they busted 115 terrorist gangs before they could unleash violence. But tallies of death tolls in the ethnically tense region suggest the violence has continued, and may even have intensified.

Information from the region is routinely suppressed so experts caution against any firm conclusions about the level of violence in the far western region that is home to 10 million members of the Muslim Uighur minority, who chafe under what they consider suppression by China's ethnic majority Han. However, both Chinese state-run media and foreign outlets who monitor Xinjiang have continued to report a stream of deadly clashes.

"It's safe to say that violence has continued roughly as it was before this latest crackdown, if not with greater intensity," said Rian Thum, an assistant professor specializing in Uighur history at Loyola University New Orleans.

Chinese state media outlets have reported at least 175 deaths in the past six months in eight violent incidents, including a massive attack on local government facilities that left 96 dead. That compares with 46 reported killed during the same period last year.

Rian Thum's own tally drawn from reports by the U.S. government-funded Radio Free Asia showed an even higher toll for the period, about 200 this year compared to roughly 50 the previous year.

Beijing blames the violence on separatist terrorists fueled by religious extremism and with ties abroad, and argues that it has invested generously to boost Xinjiang's economy and improve its quality of life. Critics attribute the violence to home-grown disgruntlement over local corruption and an influx of Hans who have brought economic development that has not equally benefited Uighurs. In May, Beijing announced a one-year security clampdown in Xinjiang following a series of high-profile attacks on civilians blamed on Uighurs, both in Xinjiang and elsewhere. That came on top of heightened security measures in place since deadly riots broke out in the Xinjiang capital of Urumqi in 2009. A six-month report card on the campaign published on the Xinjiang government's official news site this week focused on prosecution data. It said authorities detained 334 suspects and prosecuted 294 cases of sharing online terrorism-promoting audios and video, and seized 18,000 copies of illegal religious books.

The report indicates that security remains a "big problem" in Xinjiang, said Raffaello Pantucci, a London-based terrorism researcher at the defense think tank Royal United Services Institute.

The report also cites as a major success the life imprisonment of a prominent Uighur scholar known for his open criticisms of China's Xinjiang policies, although the September conviction of Ilham Tohti on the separatism charge has drawn international condemnation. □



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Venezuelan classical youth orchestra system under fire

JOSHUA GOODMAN

Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)

— It has been praised the world over as a model for uplifting disadvantaged youth by connecting them with classical music.

But a new book about Venezuela's network of youth orchestras known as El Sistema, or The System, portrays it as a "model of tyranny" where brutal, marathon practice sessions mirror the apparently unlimited power and top-down style of its magnetic founder, Jose Antonio Abreu.

"El Sistema: Orchestrating Venezuela's Youth" is the first in-depth study to question the institution whose motto of social action through music has brought together aging, conservative devotees of classical music and Venezuela's socialist government, which has bankrolled El Sistema's expansion over the past 15 years.

United Kingdom-based musicologist and arts educator Geoffrey Baker said he embarked on his research after attending a heart-stirring 2007 concert at the Proms of London by the Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra under the direction of El Sistema's best-known alum: Gustavo Dudamel, the 33-year-old wunderkind musical director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

The author of several books on Latin American music, Baker said his goal was to provide a rigorous study of the intellectual and organizational underpinnings of the musical marvel. But once in Venezuela he said he was overwhelmed by tales from current and former musicians of top-level corruption, favoritism and improper sexual relations between teachers and pu-

pils.

"Like any big institution, problems exist but to suggest there is a widespread virus is absolutely false," Eduardo Mendez, El Sistema's executive director, said by telephone from Gothenburg, Sweden, as one of its ensembles wrapped up a European tour.

and teachers at a retreat. Baker says he was unable to verify the claims and declined a request by The Associated Press to provide access to his confidential sources — ammunition for El Sistema's backers who reject his charges. He also said he never intended to probe how per-

terweight to the hype he believes has skewed public opinion and fueled a global franchising of El Sistema's teaching model to 60 countries. Much of the author's criticism focuses on Abreu, a former Cabinet minister in the government the late Hugo Chavez tried to overthrow in 1992 who founded



Jose Antonio Abreu, founder of Venezuela's network of youth orchestras known as El Sistema, or The System, attends an event at the Teresa Carreno Theater in Caracas, Venezuela. A new book about the music program portrays it as a "model of tyranny" where brutal, marathon practice sessions mirror the apparently unlimited power and top-down style of its magnetic founder.

(AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos)

Abuses alleged in Baker's book run the gamut from shouting during rehearsals to reports of the trading of sexual favors and an orgy involving students

missive abuse or disgruntlement is among the roughly 600,000 children studying in neighborhood music centers nationwide. Rather, he wanted to provide a coun-

El Sistema four decades ago. He has been collecting international praise and comparisons with Pope John Paul II and Nelson Mandela ever since.

But "El Maestro," as he's universally known, is as much feared as loved, says Baker. He's managed to adapt El Sistema to the new revolutionary times with an iron grip and political machinations that obscure any serious analysis of whether it is delivering on its social mission. The author also faults El Sistema for being out of step with a trend toward greater transparency and more innovative teaching techniques used in similarly influential European organizations.

Hanging out outside El Sistema's imposing concrete headquarters in Caracas, dozens of musicians belonging to the Simon Bolivar ensemble said they considered the book's claims outrageous. While acknowledging that the demands of the ensemble are weighty, they vigorously defended Abreu's vision, which they credit for building one of the few enduring institutions in Venezuela. None said they had witnessed cases of sexual abuse.

"It's like American football — to be on a team, you have to have extreme discipline. The coach doesn't say please and thank you," said upright bass player Abraham Maduro, who has been a member of the symphony system for 20 years.

Protesters wounded by gunfire in northeast Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Haitian authorities this week were investigating a street protest that turned violent in a northeastern town close to the country's border with the Dominican Republic. Police spokesman Frantz Lerebours confirmed people were wounded by gunfire during a protest in

Fort Liberte, but he could not immediately say how many. He also provided no details on how they were shot. Sen. Jean-Baptiste Bien-Aime, an opposition politician from Haiti's northeast area, asserted that 13 people were wounded by Haitian police officers who fired their weapons while

trying to clear demonstrators from the main road to allow trucks to pass. For the last few days, protesters in Fort Liberte have taken to the streets demanding the town be supplied with electricity from a power plant at an industrial park in nearby Caracol, the senator said.

Lerebours said the head of the Haitian National Police had sent a team to the area to investigate.

Last week, an anti-government march in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, turned violent as three demonstrators were shot by counter-demonstrators in a volatile neighborhood.

In Peru:

Vigilantes serve up justice by cracking the whip

FRANK BAJAK

Associated Press

CAJAMARCA, Peru (AP) —

The standard "peacemaker" in this highland Peruvian provincial capital is a whip fashioned from the twisted sinew of a bull penis. It gets a lot of respect. So do the well-organized bands of citizen vigilantes who wield it.

Their rise over the last decade is just one example of how Latin Americans are responding to corrupt, indifferent police forces

In an opinion poll last year, Peruvians ranked the National Police only slightly behind Congress among the country's most corrupt institutions. The judiciary came in third.

It was the rondas — and not police — who recently broke up an auto thefts parts ring, turning over evidence to the chief local prosecutor, Chuquelin boasts.

Yet their periodic whip-cracking raids on brothels have elicited outrage from

nearby.

Locally, few people complain, including judges and prosecutors who acknowledge Chuquelin's popularity and efficacy.

A big man with an easy smile and an incessantly ringing cellphone, Chuquelin lays on the last of a dozen lashes at the group's storefront one morning after patrol members deliver a short, pot-bellied man they say is a serial pickpocket.

After a few stings of the

public exposure by uploading to YouTube video of his group's public lashings.

He also arbitrates cases that authorities consider minor, settling property and debt disputes, family quarrels and marital infidelities. (Adulterous spouses typically get a few lashes and are ordered to be faithful). If a felony is committed, the rondas turn the transgressor over to police. The harshest sentence they administer, they say, is banishment.

Still, said Esperanza Leon,



Members of a vigilante group known as "rondas urbanas," or urban patrols, armed with whips, walk through the streets of Cajamarca, Peru. In response to an eroding criminal justice system, self-appointed bands of citizen vigilantes have taken on the work of police, prosecutors and judges. The rise of these citizen enforcers, who enjoy widespread support in Cajamarca, is just one response in Latin America to the failure of police forces to offer the most basic protections.

(AP Photo/Martin Mejia)

and the erosion of state-run criminal justice.

For all but the most serious crimes, justice in Cajamarca, a city of 200,000, is routinely administered by these grass-roots citizen patrol units known as "rondas urbanas."

Their punishments tend to be swift, harsh and painful. "If the police did their jobs there would be no need for us," says Fernando Chuquelin, the most popular leader of the city's 30-odd "rondas."

human rights activists and gasps from Lima TV reporters, who tend to portray them as Andean-style Taliban morality police.

In brothel raids, ski-masked vigilantes have left welts on women they've whipped — and set fire to mattresses and other furniture carried into the street.

Prostitution is legal in Peru, but Chuquelin says he only targets bordellos with underage sex workers or that have become magnets for criminals who rob people

whip, the man shrieks, jumps to his feet and begs for mercy. He confesses, pays \$60 to a woman who says he stole her cellphone, and is let go. "That's how we deal with this kind of thief," says Chuquelin.

Every day, people visit his no-frills storefront and fill out summonses. No case is too small, no dispute too trivial. People don't dare ignore the summonses, and the hearings are often standing-room-only.

Chuquelin, 50, maximizes

the top local prosecutor in Cajamarca, the bands are illegal.

"If this is allowed to spread, there's going to be chaos," she said, even though she often must coordinate with Chuquelin.

"People turn to the rondas because they are more accessible," said Cajamarca state's chief judge, Fernando Bazan. "People rely on them daily — and daily tell us to our face that we are incapable of guaranteeing security."

HSBC charged for tax evasion in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina

(AP) — Argentina's tax agency charged HSBC bank this week with helping more than 4,000 Argentines evade taxes by placing their money in secret Swiss accounts.

The head of the country's AFIP tax agency, Ricardo Echegaray, said Argentine citizens evaded about \$3 billion in taxes that were handled by intermediaries through a network of offshore accounts.

Echegaray alleged that some of those accounts in Geneva are owned by HSBC Argentina's president and other bank executives. He did not say if the bank's operations had been suspended in Argentina.

"There's no doubt that the AFIP will keep cracking down on tax havens because our objective is to collect taxes and to avoid harming those who have less," he said.

AFIP said it got its information from France, where HSBC was placed under formal investigation last week for possibly aiding tax evasion. The banking company has also been charged in Belgium with organized fiscal fraud.

AFIP charged the local branch of HSBC and its executives in an Argentine federal court.

HSBC said it respects Argentine laws and has committed no wrongdoing.

"HSBC Argentina emphatically rejects its participation in any illegal association, including any organization that allows capital flight aimed at evading taxes," its statement said. "HSBC Argentina wants to clarify that it doesn't have an account in HSBC Switzerland."

Argentina's government has denounced several foreign companies in its fight to curb capital flight. The left-leaning government recently accused Procter & Gamble of tax fraud and said it had suspended the operations of the household goods giant in this South American

LOCAL Aruba TODAY

Aruba Marriott Supports the “Traveling Blood Bag”



PALM BEACH - Starting this week, the Aruba Marriott will host the “Traveling Blood Bag” on property for a month to raise awareness amongst associates and to encourage them to become blood donors.

Associates can sign up by filling in one of the red application cards and submitting it in one of the blood bags attached to the board of the “Traveling

Blood Bag” stand, which will be located in the associate hallway of each property. The local community is also welcome to the Aruba Marriott to sign up.

During the official introduction of the “Traveling Blood Bag” at the Aruba Marriott, Complex GM Tom Calame, Director of HR Ruthline Tromp and Director of



Revenue Aisling Seberry together with numerous associates eagerly signed up to be the first Aruba Marriott volunteers to donate

blood. The “Traveling Blood Bag” is an effort of the Blood Bank of Aruba aimed at raising awareness and recruiting

donors by having the stand placed at different locations and providing informational presentations to the community. □



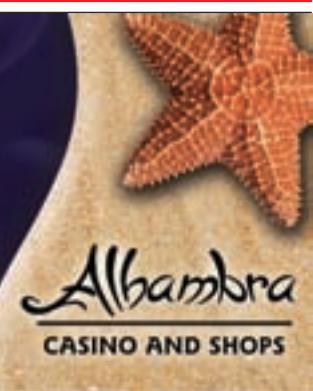


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Ribbon is cut on new pool:

Playa Linda continues to invest in its iconic property



PALM BEACH —The Playa Linda Beach Resort is marking its more than 30 years as a mainstay in the island's tourism industry by changing things up through continuous investment. As a way to kick-off its recent round of new renovations, General Manager Steven Marra, Director of Opera-

tions Peter van Grinsven, HR Manager Sulaika Kelly and Executive Housekeeper Ingrid Todd, together with Co-op Board Members Michael Nowicki and Gary Hofstetter, cut the ribbon on a brand new pool — the completion of the first project in a list of improvements which will transform



the resort over the next year.

"We remain committed to

our guests, timeshare owners and employees, as well as to the island in Aruba, in ensuring the Playa Linda continues to be a premier timeshare property. We want to represent the best the island has to offer in both upscale accommodations as well as Aruban hospitality, and in doing so, we are pleased to use local contractors and keep our investment dollars in the local economy," comments General Manager Steven Marra.

The resort's easily recognizable, many-tiered design has been a part of the island landscape for decades, and holds the distinction of being one of the island's first timeshare options. Several major renovations have taken place since the resort first opened

its doors back in 1983, but recent changes present an additional investment in Playa Linda's public areas. The new pool is only a part of Phase I, with Phase II work to begin next year on the main pool as well as the lobby and the main entranceway into the resort. Plans also include an expanded pool deck with LED lit pavers, handicap access ramps, new bathrooms and a kiddie water fountain feature.

The recent celebration took place poolside, against the picturesque backdrop framed by both the clay tile-roofed resort and stunning ocean views. Guests toasted to the success of the completion of the new pool as yet another chapter in the history of an iconic Aruban resort. □

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If you're ready to try Lionfish for the first time, request the tasty fish at your favorite Seafood Restaurants in Aruba.

Tickets for the Save the Reef Event on Nov 30 can be purchased at the Jolly Pirates Gift Shop for Awg 50. Save the Reef Party Sponsors: Aruba Marine Park Foundation, Aruba Wine and Dine, Grafficas Aruba and D'Art. Please call 592-7858 for more Party Information □



awareness about Aruba's Lionfish Invasion Participants recently organized Lionfish Derbies to spear up 150 kilos of the tasty LIONFISH for their guests to sample at the Save the Reef Party which will be held at Nos Clubhuis, upstairs from Hadicurari Restaurant on November 30th from 6 to 8pm.

Hosted by the ARUBA MARINE PARK FOUNDATION and Aruba Wine and Dine, the sunset happy hour event will offer an assortment of lionfish tastings by three creative chefs. To create more excitement for the event a lovely wine tasting will be sponsored from Romar Trading.

Guests will learn more about the predatory Lionfish from Marine Biologist Byron Boekhoudt and Dr. Rudolf Davelaar while

sampling Lionfish offerings. The Aruba Wine and Dine team will share recipes and teach you to enjoy this tasty, firm white fish with a high concentration of heart-healthy Omega -3 fatty acids. Scoring more health benefits than Red Snapper, Grouper, Mahi Mahi and Wahoo, Lionfish swimming in our pristine waters of Aruba are very healthy fish and considered the Salmon of Coral Reefs.

Besides being healthy and tasty, there is a more important reason for making Lionfish your dinner special. This invasive species threatens to displace our local species. There are just way too many of them in our waters. Because they have no predators and our local fish do not recognize their danger, our fish swim

towards the pretty colorful Lionfish and get gobbled up. Lionfish lure our Grouper and Red Snapper, they eat our Lobster and deplete our reefs by swallowing anything that gets in their path.

Worse Lionfish have no

known ocean predators and repopulate quickly. Female Lionfish are producing 30,000 eggs every five days and this is what keeps Aruba's volunteer Lionfish Hunters spearing each beautiful, spiny menace, one by one.



PALM BEACH - The Giannopoulos, Vincenti, and Babigian families are annual Thanksgiving visitors to Aruba. Yesterday The Aruba Today featured a few photos of the families with their sculpture 'Turkey in the Sand,' a tribute to their enjoyment of spending Thanksgiving on Aruba, which was a big hit with our readers! Featured is a picture of the Snowman their children built on the same beach when they heard their home-towns of New York and Boston were getting snowstorms during the holidays! We were wondering however, in this case do we call it a Snowman or a Sandman?? Anyhow- We love it! Enjoy your vacation!! □

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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Rice wins appeal, 'suspension vacated'

BARRY WILNER

AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Ray Rice has won the appeal of his indefinite suspension by the NFL.

An arbitrator ruled Friday that his suspension for punching his fiancee, now his wife, should be vacated immediately. The NFL said Rice, a free agent, is "eligible to play upon signing a new contract."

Former U.S. District Judge Barbara S. Jones said Commissioner Roger Goodell's decision in September to change Rice's original suspension from two games to indefinite was "arbitrary" and an "abuse of discretion."

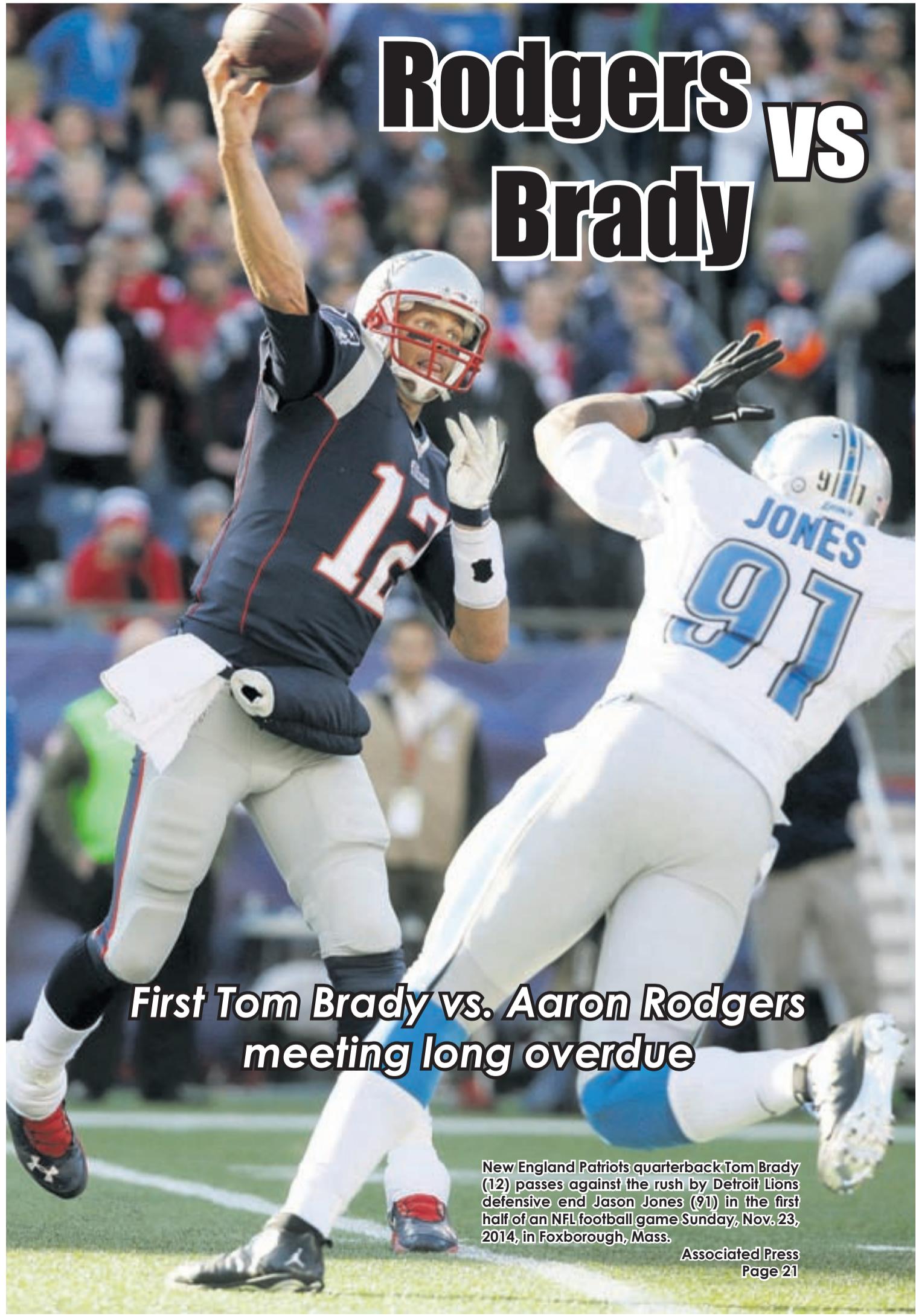
Jones was deciding whether the NFL overstepped its authority in modifying Rice's two-game suspension after video of the Baltimore Ravens running back punching Janay became public.

Rice was released by the Ravens when the video went public. Rice and the union contended he was essentially sentenced twice, and Jones agreed. She noted in her decision that after Goodell increased the punishment for a first offense under the personal conduct policy from two to six games, "the commissioner called Rice to assure him that the new policy would not affect him — that it was forward-looking and his penalty would not be increased." In her decision, Jones also wrote:

Continued on Page 20

Rodgers vs Brady

First Tom Brady vs. Aaron Rodgers meeting long overdue



New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) passes against the rush by Detroit Lions defensive end Jason Jones (91) in the first half of an NFL football game Sunday, Nov. 23, 2014, in Foxborough, Mass.

Associated Press
Page 21

Chalmers leads Australian Open; McIlroy shares 2nd

By DENNIS PASSA

AP Sports Writer

SYDNEY (AP) -- Two-time former champion Greg Chalmers took a one-stroke lead Friday at the Australian Open after a 5-under 66, while marquee attractions Rory McIlroy and Adam Scott weren't far behind on a tough day for scoring.

Chalmers had seven birdies in his second round to move to 5-under 137 after 36 holes.

Defending champion McIlroy played in difficult afternoon conditions at The Australian Golf Club and he persevered for an up-and-down 69 to be in a group tied for second.

Scott and American Jordan Spieth played together in calmer morning conditions and Spieth (72) was in a group tied for sixth, two behind. Scott, who moved from potential cut to contention with a 66, was three strokes behind.

After two rounds, there



Australia's Greg Chalmers tees off on the 14th hole during the second round of the Australian Open Golf championship in Sydney, Friday, Nov. 28, 2014.

Associated Press

were only 16 players under par.

The group of four tied with McIlroy included American Conrad Shindler, who shot 68. Last year, Schindler donated all his \$15,000 prize money from his first win as a pro on a U.S. developmental circuit to a relief fund for victims of tornadoes in Oklahoma.

Chalmers, who the Australian Open in 1998 and 2011, said the swirling winds Friday made club selection difficult.

"It seemed to move around a little bit and change direction," Chalmers said. "Sometimes you think you should be downwind and because you've turned in a certain direction you're

actually into the wind. I think I changed clubs two or three times on shots."

McIlroy only had only one par on the back nine - the 10th. The others, from the 11th, went birdie, bogey, bogey, eagle, birdie, bogey, birdie, birdie. He also birdied the ninth with about a 70-foot putt, but also plunked balls in the water on two holes for bogeys.

"I felt like I had an opportunity today to maybe shoot a good one and put a little bit of space between myself and the rest of the field, but it didn't really pan out that way," McIlroy said.

Spieth had to call for a rules official on the par-3 fourth hole when a marshal stood on his ball, but neglected to tell him when he got to the green.

Members of the gallery informed Spieth, and after he took a drop, the American fluffed his chip and missed his putt for par. On the way to the next hole, he angrily

flung his ball into a creek. His round ended well with birdies on his last two holes, but that wasn't enough to make it feel like a good day for Spieth.

"It was a struggle, big-time struggle," Spieth said. "I wasn't hitting it well. If I wasn't putting well I may have shot 45 on the back nine."

Scott, starting on the 10th tee Friday, made quick amends for his opening-round 74 which left him in 82nd place and in danger of missing the cut. He eagled the par-5 14th and had two birdies to make the turn in 32, then birdied the par-4 sixth coming home.

"Yesterday I got off to a bad start, and I didn't scramble well when I had to and it started to get away from me," Scott said. "Today a couple of good shots coming up 14 and I made an eagle and momentum is on your side."

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Chiefs can pay tribute to Eric Berry with win

BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

In a holiday week packed with meaningful NFL games, the AFC West division showdown between the Denver Broncos and Kansas City Chiefs will have as much impact as any. A Kansas City home victory would lift the Chiefs into a tie atop the division, and give San Diego an opening to join them. It would endanger home-field advantage in the conference for Denver, which it has owned for the past two years, making the Super Bowl last season.

It also would atone, in part, for the Chiefs' flop at Oakland on Nov. 20, handing the Raiders their first victory this season.

And it would be a moving tribute to safety Eric Berry, one of the franchise's most popular players who was found to have a mass in his chest that doctors believe could be lymphoma.

"I would go back to what Eric said to the team," coach Andy Reid says.

"He said, 'Listen it's about the Broncos now and let's move on.' And the guys have taken that to heart. They're focused in and ready to go."

They'll need to be against Peyton Manning and Denver's high-powered offense. A Broncos win would keep them within striking distance of New England for the AFC's best record. Still, can they do it in a hostile environment? The Broncos are unbeaten in six games at home, but they're just 2-3 on the road, including a stunning loss to St. Louis recently.

On Monday, the Miami Dolphins and New York Jets meet in a rivalry that rarely fails to disappoint.

The previous time these teams met, the Jets finished off an 8-8 record last December with a win at Miami to knock the Dolphins from playoff contention. Rex Ryan's bunch has been a flop since then.

Their awful performance last Monday in a 38-3 loss to Buffalo in Detroit — the



In this Nov. 16, 2014, file photo, Kansas City Chiefs strong safety Eric Berry (29) enters the field prior to an NFL football game against the Seattle Seahawks in Kansas City, Mo. Berry is gearing up for a fight after a mass was found in his chest following last week's game in Oakland. He was placed on the non-football injury list Monday, and trainer Rick Burkholder said Berry may have lymphoma.

Associated Press

Bills didn't seem bothered by the change of venue because of massive snowstorms in Western New York — bodes very poorly for Ryan.

Miami is inconsistent, but plays everyone tough. For any chance to remain a wild-card contender, the Dolphins have to win this prime-time affair.

The holiday weekend began with the Thanksgiving Day tripleheader.

Philadelphia grabbed sole possession of first place in the NFC East with a 33-10 rout of Dallas, Seattle's defense was dominant for the second straight week, shutting down San Francisco 19-3, and Detroit kept its NFC North hopes strong by beating Chicago 34-17.

Also on Sunday, it's Arizona at Atlanta, New Orleans at Pittsburgh, Carolina at Minnesota, Cincinnati at Tampa Bay, Cleveland at Buffalo, San Diego at Baltimore, Tennessee at Houston, Oakland at St. Louis, Washington at Indianapolis, and New York Giants at Jacksonville. □

Hospital says Pele's condition is improving



In this Nov. 19, 2008 file photo, Brazil's soccer great Pele greets supporters prior to a friendly soccer match, in Brasilia, Brazil.

Associated Press

TALES AZZONI
AP Sports Writer

SAO PAULO (AP) — Pele is responding well to antibiotics to treat a urinary tract infection and his condition is improving, doctors said Friday.

The Albert Einstein hospital said the 74-year-old Pele remains in an intensive care unit undergoing "temporary" kidney treatment, but is "lucid" and breathing and eating normally without any support.

"Pele's clinical condition has been improving," the hospital said in its latest report.

Pele's personal adviser, Jose Fornos Rodrigues, confirmed Friday that Pele only has one kidney since the time he was a player, but said it was not affecting his treatment.

Pele had surgery to remove the kidney back in the 1970s after complications from a broken rib.

"He had the kidney removed a long time ago, his body is already used to it, it's not a problem at all," Rodrigues told The Associated Press.

The Brazilian soccer great

had surgery to remove kidney stones on Nov. 13. He was readmitted to the hospital on Monday after being diagnosed with the urinary tract infection.

Doctors continued to administer intravenous kidney treatment, a type of hemodialysis to filter waste particles from his blood.

The hospital's press office would not say if Pele's condition was affected because he has only one kidney.

The hospital said there was no sign of a widespread infection.

"The only (type of) bacteria identified so far is sensitive to the antibiotics being administered," the hospital's statement said, adding that the three-time World Cup champion was not receiving any additional medication to keep him stable.

Pele said on Twitter late

Thursday that he was not seriously ill and was "looking forward to spending the upcoming holidays" with his family.

Pele's manager, Paul Kemsley, said in a statement that the former player was expected to make a "quick and full" recovery from the "minor infection caused by his recent successful surgery."

Pele was diagnosed with kidney stones after having to cancel an event at his museum in the coastal city of Santos because of abdominal pain.

The surgery was successful and he was released from the hospital just a few days after the procedure.

Pele's condition has been closely monitored in Brazil and the rest of the world since the hospital in Sao Paulo said he became unstable and was transferred to an intensive care unit.

Although Pele and his staff have been downplaying the seriousness of the illness, local media published many unconfirmed reports about a deterioration of his health.

Pele has been healthy recently despite needing to undergo surgeries for a hip replacement and a detached retina.

Widely regarded as the greatest soccer player of all time, Pele is a national hero in Brazil and remains a worldwide ambassador to the game.

He is active with his many businesses across the globe and still participates in many advertising campaigns. The former Santos and New York Cosmos player is often present at major tournaments.

Pele is known as the game's most prolific scorer, credited with 1,281 goals in 1,363 career matches. □

Rice appeal

Continued on Page 20

"Because Rice did not mislead the commissioner and because there were no new facts on which the commissioner could base his increased suspension, I find that the imposition of the indefinite suspension was arbitrary. I therefore vacate the second penalty imposed on Rice."

"The provisions of the first discipline — those regarding making continued use of counseling and other professional services, having no further involvement with law enforcement, and not committing any additional violations of league policies — still stand."

The NFL said it accepted the decision.

"We respect Judge Jones's decision to reinstate Ray Rice from his indefinite suspension for violating the league's personal conduct policy in an incident of domestic violence," spokesman Greg Aiello said in an email to The Associated

Press.

"Ray Rice is a free agent and has been eligible to be signed by an NFL team since he was released by the Ravens. Based on Judge Jones' decision, he will be eligible to play upon signing a new contract."

Goodell and the Rices testified at the hearing, as did NFL security chief Jeffrey Miller and Ravens general manager Ozzie Newsome. During his appearance, Goodell told Jones: "I do accept that I have to be consistent with consistent circumstances, and ... I think that's about fairness, and fairness would be, you should be as consistent as possible in your discipline." The NFL Players Association claimed a "victory for a disciplinary process that is fair and transparent" in a statement. The union called again for collective bargaining to produce a new personal conduct policy. □



ABOVE: In this Nov. 5, 2014, file photo, Ray Rice arrives with his wife Janay Palmer for an appeal hearing of his indefinite suspension from the NFL in New York. BELOW: In this Sept. 19, 2014, file photo, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell pauses as he speaks during a news conference in New York. Associated Press

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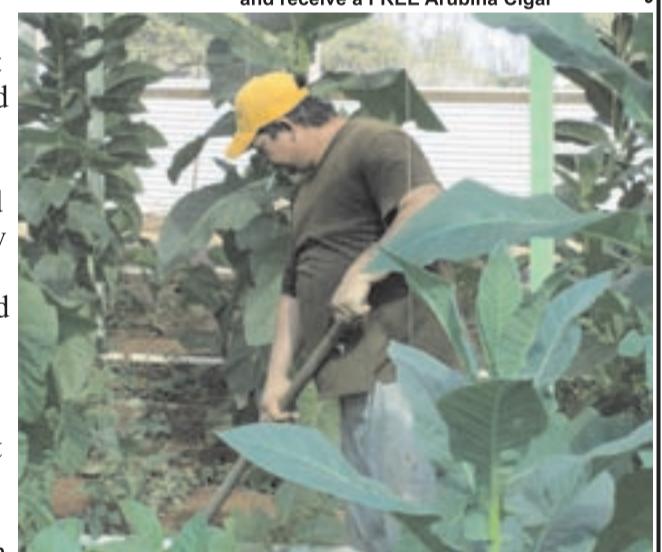


ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi's dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers

Aruhiba as a promotion for Aruba through its fine cigars. The company sells Aruhiba to the international markets as well. Visit their retail store located in front of the Historic Dutch Windmill in front of the RIO Hotel, with any purchase of \$20 and up you receive a free "Aruhiba" cigar or ask for their gift box of 5 cigars get 1 FREE for only \$37. They open from Monday to Saturday from 9 am till 6:30 pm and on Sundays from 10 am to 4 pm. Aruhiba cigars are now available at the gift stores in your resort and at well-known cigar stores. For their complete selection and attractive by the box prices visit their retail store. Tours are also available at their Tobacco farm where their cigars are grown and rolled. Winner of the best of Aruba. The best local product.

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Owner Benjamin Petrocchi



Watch No. 12: Tom Brady vs Aaron Rodgers

KEN POWTAK

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Massachusetts (AP) — Aaron Rodgers and Tom Brady have at least one thing in common: "They both wear No. 12," New England Patriots coach Bill Belichick joked. A more thorough comparison will be made on Sunday when the Green Bay Packers welcome New England at Lambeau Field in a matchup of two of the NFL's best teams, and the quarterbacks start against each other for the first time. Rodgers' Packers and Brady's Patriots are riding high in their respective conferences.

New England owns the AFC's best record at 9-2, going in riding a seven-game winning streak. NFC North-leading Green Bay has won seven of its last eight games for an 8-3 record.

Rodgers has thrown 30 touchdowns with just three interceptions this season, completing 66.7 percent of his passes. Since a 1-2 start, he has 25 touchdowns to two interceptions, matching Brady's 2007 record of four straight games of three or more touchdowns with no interceptions.

"He's the best quarterback I've seen on tape," said New England safety Devin McCourty, who has already faced Peyton Manning and Andrew Luck this season.

Rodgers' run started after he told Packers fans on his radio show in September: "Five letters here, just for everybody out there in Packer land: R-E-L-A-X. Relax. We're going to be OK." He couldn't resist that answer when asked about the turnaround again this week. "We've been pretty relaxed," he said, smiling. Brady's season isn't much different.

Following a blowout loss in Kansas City in Week 4, his ability was questioned. He was asked if time had passed him by.

Instead, during the winning streak, the 37-year-old has connected for 22 touchdowns with only four interceptions, completing 67.3



Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers, left, breaks a tackle by Minnesota Vikings defensive tackle Shamar Stephen (93) during the first half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Nov. 23, 2014, in Minneapolis.

Associated Press



New England Patriots running back Jonas Gray, center, celebrates his touchdown with quarterback Tom Brady, right, and tight end Rob Gronkowski during the first half of an NFL football game against the Indianapolis Colts in Indianapolis, Sunday, Nov. 16, 2014.

Associated Press

percent of his passes.

"What we went through, we went through, and hopefully we've moved past," said the two-time league MVP (2007 and '10). "There are going to be sleepless

nights, and you've just got to stay true to what you're doing."

They've both relied on scoring a lot early in games, and enter this weekend as the NFL's only two unbeat-

en teams in November.

Green Bay has averaged 44 points this month, and leads the league with 28 first-half touchdowns this season. New England, second in points during the

month at 39.7, is right behind the Packers with 24 touchdowns before half-time.

In their last two home games, the Packers have put up 50-plus points. □

Butler, Rose carry Bulls past Celtics 109-102

By KEN POWTAK
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) -- It's no secret that the Chicago Bulls are a much better team with a healthy He showed that again on Friday afternoon when the Bulls were struggling to get consistent offense.

Rose scored 14 of his 21 points in the second half - 12 coming early in the third quarter - to help the Bulls pull away for a 109-102 win over the Boston Celtics.

"When he plays like that, it's huge for our team," Chicago coach Tom Thibodeau said. "When you look at his plus-minus when he's on the floor for our team this year, it's off the charts. When he's on the floor it makes a big difference for our team. I think we all know that."

Rose missed large portions of the past two seasons with serious knee injuries. He's been struggling to stay in the lineup this year due to ankle and hamstring injuries.

"The confidence is through the roof," he said. "I don't need more confidence. I just need to play. I know how good I am and how good I can be. It's just I need to be out there playing."

Jimmy Butler hit four free

throws late in the game and finished with 22 points for Chicago, which had lost four of its previous six games.

Pau Gasol had 15 points and 15 rebounds, and Joakim Noah added 15 points and 14 boards for the Bulls. "Every time he's on the court he makes our team better," Noah said of Rose. "Any time he's on the court it just makes us that much more dangerous."

Rose was held to seven points in the opening half before the 2010-11 MVP scored the 12 in the opening 4 minutes of the second half. After he went to the bench with 4:52 left in the third, he didn't return until 7:02 remained in the game. Jared Sullinger led Boston with 23 points and 10 rebounds. Avery Bradley had 18 points and Brandon Bass 16 with nine boards. Rajon Rondo had eight points, seven rebounds and nine assists for the Celtics, who have lost six of seven.

"I'm not going to lose any sleep over the ball not going into the basket," Boston coach Brad Stevens said. "We've got to finish. That's the bottom line." With the score tied at 100, Jeff Green's driving basket put the Celtics ahead with 2 1/2 minutes left. Af-



Boston Celtics guard Rajon Rondo (9) fights for a loose ball with Chicago Bulls guard Jimmy Butler, left, and guard Kirk Hinrich (12) in the second half of a basketball game in Boston, Friday, Nov. 28, 2014. The Bulls won 109-102.

ter each team failed to score on a couple of possessions, Butler's two free throws tied it with 80 seconds to play.

Rondo missed two free throws and Sullinger front-rimmed an attempted 3 before Butler's two free throws moved the Bulls ahead for good, 104-102, with 51 seconds left. Noah then nailed a short jumper on their next possession.

"We had a lot of open shots that didn't fall in the fourth," Sullinger said.

Boston missed 17 of its first

20 shots in the final quarter before Sullinger's conventional 3-point play tied it at 100 with 3 minutes to play. He was fouled driving down the lane by Noah, who was attempting to draw a charge.

The Celtics held a 91-85 edge after three periods when Sullinger made a 3 with four-tenths of a second left in the quarter.

Forsberg, Rinne lead Preds over Oilers 1-0 in OT

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP)

— Filip Forsberg scored at 3:55 of overtime to give the Nashville Predators a 1-0 victory over Edmonton on Thursday night, handing the Oilers their eighth consecutive defeat.

Pekka Rinne made 37 saves for the Predators, who have won three straight. He stopped Jordan Eberle on a penalty shot early in overtime.

Seconds after Nashville defenseman Roman Josi hit the crossbar with a shot, Forsberg spun to free himself from a defender and beat Viktor Fasth with a

wrist shot from the left circle.

Rinne's best save came 13 seconds into overtime when he denied Eberle's penalty shot after Predators captain Shea Weber was called for closing his hand on the puck while it was in the crease. Rinne made the ensuing stop on Eberle with his left skate against the post.

The Predators finished 0 for 5 on the power play. They are an NHL-worst 1 for 37 at home this season with the man advantage.

Nashville center Mike Fisher appeared in his first game

of the season. Fisher sustained an Achilles tendon injury while training over the summer and missed the first 21 games.

Oilers forward Matt Hendricks was injured at 2:12 of the first period when he blocked a shot from Weber. The shot hit Hendricks in the left leg.

Hendricks, a former Predator, hobbled back to the Edmonton bench and proceeded directly to the dressing room. The team announced that he would not return to the game due to a leg injury.



Review: 4 shopping apps that will save you money

By JOSEPH PISANI
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) -- Want to save some cash while holiday shopping? The best tool can be a smartphone packed with the right apps. Some apps give you coupons you can hand to the cashier to scan, while others let you flip through advertising deals and promotions. Others let you scan barcodes at the store and check if there are cheaper options online.

I found four apps to recommend after testing more than a dozen over the past month. All four are easy to use and nicely designed. Before you hit the mall, though, you might want to turn off notifications for these apps. Some of them will send you an alert every time a deal pops up, which can get annoying.

- **Retaile** (available for Apple and Android devices) Promotional circulars found in newspapers can now be delivered to your phone or tablet. Open the Retaile app to get fliers for stores near you. I found circulars for Macy's, Target, Toys R Us, Best Buy and other national retailers.

If a circular has coupons, Retaile slaps a small green icon with scissors on it. This way, you don't have to sift through each page to find them. When you open a circular with coupons, you simply tap it once to "clip" all the coupons. That places them into a separate folder to use when you get to the store. At Macy's, I used a 20 percent discount coupon that was scanned from the app at the register. You can also print out coupons if you prefer.

I tried four different apps that digitize circulars, but Retaile was the easiest to use and had the best design.

- **RetailMeNot** (available for Apple and Android devices)

I tested several coupon apps, but I end up coming back to RetailMeNot. It's easy to use, and its map function can find deals at stores near you.

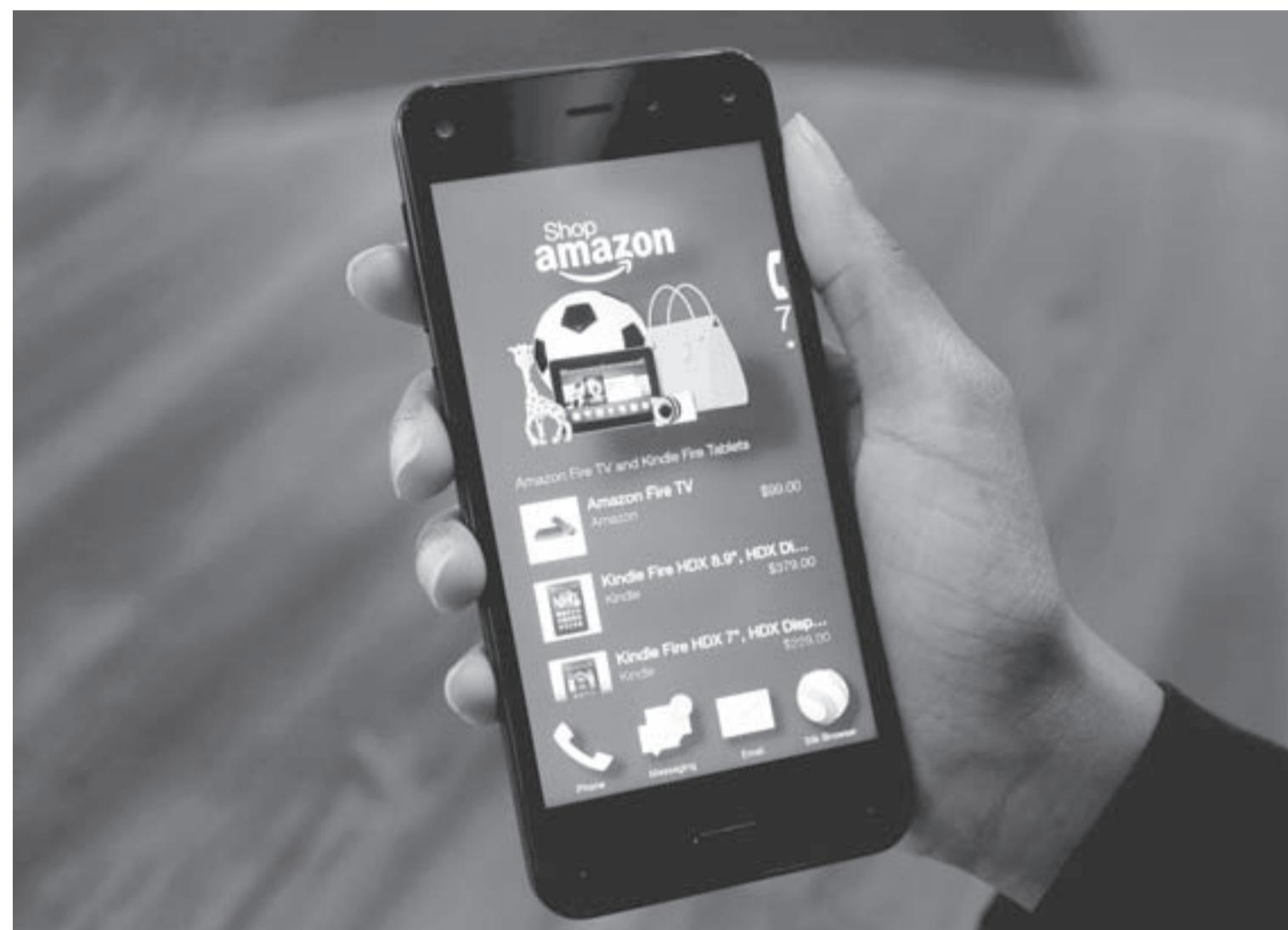
Tap the heart icon to select your favorite shops. You'll be able to see deals at those stores quickly when

been price matching for a few years.

Use the Amazon App to scan barcodes of items

typically accept matches only from specific rivals. For example, all of them exclude third-party mer-

its own website, Amazon, Wal-Mart, Best Buy and Toys R Us. So if you find a lower price at Sears or



FILE - This June 18, 2014, file photo shows the app that links to shopping on Amazon.com on the new Amazon Fire Phone, in Seattle. The best tool for saving money while holiday shopping can be a smartphone packed with the right apps.

you open the app. I used a 20 percent off coupon at Best Buy, saving me about \$10 off a \$50 Magic Bullet blender set.

You get both in-store coupons and codes for stores' websites. While I was at Gap and Steve Madden, for instance, there wasn't a coupon available for in-store use. But I saw a 30 percent coupon for Gap.com and a 20 percent coupon for SteveMadden.com, so I left and bought the items online.

- **Amazon and RedLaser** (available for Apple, Android and Windows devices)

Price matching is spreading to more stores, and you'll need these two apps to do it. Wal-Mart Stores Inc. is the latest company to promise to match cheaper prices you find online. Other retailers, including Best Buy Co. Inc., Target Inc. and Toys R Us Inc., have

in the retail store and see how much the online retailer charges. If you find a better price, show the app to a cashier. To find prices elsewhere, use RedLaser. The app, which is owned by eBay Inc., shows prices for other online stores when you scan a barcode.

Policies vary, and retailers

chants that use Amazon. The item shown on the Amazon App must be sold and shipped by Amazon.com Inc. I was rejected at Best Buy for one item sold by a third party. With RedLaser, the store will honor only some prices found. Target, for instance, accepts online matches from

Kmart, you still have to pay the regular price.

Even with those restrictions, I have still gotten cashiers at Best Buy and Target to knock as much as \$15 off an item.

Follow Joseph Pisani on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/josephpisani> □

Germany signs no-spy deal with BlackBerry

BERLIN (AP) — Germany has approved BlackBerry's purchase of encryption firm Secusmart after signing a "no-spy" agreement with the Canadian smartphone maker.

Duesseldorf-based Secusmart provides special smartphones to German government officials that are meant to be safe from eavesdropping.

German media report

that BlackBerry has agreed to provide Germany with access to software source codes.

Public broadcasters NDR and WDR, and daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung, also report that BlackBerry has provided Germany with assurances that it isn't required to pass any confidential data to other governments.

Interior Ministry spokes-

man Johannes Dimroth declined to publicly comment on a confidential agreement but said "we have succeeded in protecting our security interests." Germany reacted with anger last year to reports, based on documents leaked by Edward Snowden, that the NSA had targeted Chancellor Angela Merkel's cell phone. □

Stocks sideways in short trading day

MATTHEW CRAFT
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A sharp drop in crude prices tugged down shares in oil and gas companies on Friday, leading the Standard & Poor's 500 index to a slight loss in a short trading session. The index, a benchmark for many investments, still closed out November with its third-best month this year.

"Crude is the big story today," said JJ Kinahan, TD Ameritrade's chief strategist. "There are very clear winners and losers. The Chevrons and Exxons of the world are getting hammered; then on the other side you have the shipping companies — UPS and FedEx — along with the airlines. For them, it's a beau-

up 4.31 points, less than 0.1 percent, to 4,791.63. Regular U.S. trading closed at 1 p.m. Eastern time on Friday and the market was shut Thursday for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Rising corporate profits and a steadily improving U.S. economy have helped push the stock market to record highs this month. The S&P 500 gained 2.5 percent in November. But it was a quiet climb, a combination of many small steps. There wasn't a single day in November that the index rose more than 1 percent.

The main news driving trading was a decision made Thursday by the OPEC oil cartel to keep production at 30 million barrels a day. That announcement hit oil

spend. But it has battered drillers, producers and other companies that provide services to the oil and gas industry.

It was the same story Friday. United Parcel Service gained 3 percent, and FedEx added 2 percent.

Around the world, the slide in crude prices pulled oil and gas companies down. Newfield Exploration lost 16 percent and QEP Resources 15 percent, the two steepest drops by any company in the S&P 500 index.

In Asia, China's state-owned oil giant CNOOC, the country's biggest crude producer, plunged. In Europe, shares in Royal Dutch Shell, Total and other energy giants fell.

Despite those steep drops,



Joseph Kalikas, 11, listens to his father Tommy Kalikas in his booth on the trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Friday, Nov. 28, 2014. U.S. stocks indexes were mixed in early trading, as tumbling oil prices weighed on shares of Exxon Mobil, Chevron and other oil and gas giants. Airlines, however, made gains. Children traditionally accompany parents on the floor during the shortened trading day after Thanksgiving.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

tiful story." The S&P 500 index lost 5.27 points, or 0.3 percent, to close at 2,067.56. As a group, energy companies lost 6 percent, the worst drop of the 10 sectors in the S&P 500 by far.

The Dow Jones industrial average inched up 0.49 of a point, a sliver of a percent, to eke out another record high, 17,828.24. The Nasdaq composite picked

prices hard as traders expect the global supply of oil to stay high. Crude oil slumped \$7.54, or 10 percent, to settle at \$66.15. The recent slide for oil prices has had a double-edged effect on the market.

It has given a boost to airlines, shippers, retailers and cruise lines, which benefit from both falling costs and customers having more money in their pockets to

Europe's major markets ended with slight gains. France's CAC 40 added 0.2 percent, while Germany's DAX inched up 0.1 percent. In the U.K, the FTSE 100 index of leading British companies barely moved from the previous day.

"The template for equity markets today has been clear from the beginning," said Alastair McCaig, market analyst at IG. □



People wait to cross a street in front of a Shell filling station with the electric indicator showing a liter of regular gas price, top, at 148 yen, or \$1.25, per liter (554 yen, or \$4.69 per gallon) in Tokyo Friday, Nov. 28, 2014. A renewed plunge in oil prices is a worrying sign of weakness in the global economy that could shake governments dependent on oil revenues.

(AP Photo/Koji Sasahara)

Energy shares slide across globe after OPEC decision

KELVIN CHAN
AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) — Crude oil and energy shares tumbled Friday as OPEC's decision to keep production steady rippled across the globe. Japanese stocks rose after a slew of uninspiring economic data raised hopes that more stimulus was in the pipeline while other global indexes were mixed.

KEEPING SCORE: European shares opened lower, with France's CAC 40 down 0.6 percent to 4,356.26. Britain's FTSE 100 fell 0.8 percent to 6,673.24 and Germany's DAX slipped 0.7 percent to 9,905.45. U.S. shares were poised to fall at the open, with Dow futures dipping 0.2 percent to 17,773. Broader S&P 500 futures lost 0.2 percent to 2,067.

ENERGY SLUMP: The oil cartel decided to maintain production at 30 million barrels a day despite global oversupply, as the Saudis and their Gulf allies hope to pressure rival producers in the U.S. That sent oil prices to four-year lows. Benchmark U.S. crude oil tumbled 6.8 percent, or \$4.99, to \$68.70 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, used to price oil sold on international markets, slipped 61 cents to \$71.97 after losing about \$5 in the previous session.

BIG MOVERS: Oil-related

stocks were the big losers following the slide in crude prices. Chinese state-owned oil giant CNOOC, the country's biggest crude producer, plunged 5.5 percent and PetroChina slid 3.3 percent. Shares of Anglo-Australian miner BHP Billiton, which has crude oil interests, slipped 3.4 percent in Sydney. BP dived 3.9 percent in London and Total sank 4.6 percent in Paris trading.

ASIA'S DAY: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index rose 1.2 percent to close at 17,459.85 while South Korea's Kospi slipped 0.1 percent to 1,980.78. Hong Kong's Hang Seng edged 0.1 percent lower to 23,987.45 while in mainland China the Shanghai Composite Index gained 2 percent to 2,682.83. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 tumbled 1.6 percent to 5,313.00. Benchmarks in Taiwan, Singapore and the Philippines rose while in Thailand, Indonesia and New Zealand they fell.

JAPAN DATA: A raft of data releases gave mixed signs about the state of Asia's second biggest economy but the Nikkei surged nonetheless, a sign that investors thought that the initial reaction to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's renewed stimulus efforts wasn't enough and that more was in the pipeline. Inflation edged lower while industrial output edged up from the month before and unemployment eased slightly. □

Swiss set to vote on massive gold-buying plan

JOHN HEILPRIN
Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — In Switzerland, a campaign is on to protect the country's wealth by investing in gold — a lot of gold.

In a test of their sense of financial security, the Swiss are being asked to vote on a proposal to make the central bank hold a fifth of its reserves in gold within five years. That would mean buying about 1,500 metric tons, or 1,650 short tons, of gold worth more than \$60 billion.

If the initiative wins the backing of a majority of voters this Sunday, the Swiss National Bank would also be prohibited from spending any of the treasure, which would have to be locked away in vaults entirely on Swiss soil. The prospect risks causing a spike in gold prices globally.

The nationalist Swiss People's Party, the country's largest, has brought the "Save our Swiss Gold" initiative, arguing it will restore trust in the central bank

and its paper money. The proposal is opposed by the government and financial leaders but aims to capitalize on a growing sense of caution among the Swiss about the perceived dangers and increasing volatility of financial markets.

Though the country is among the world's most prosperous, the initiative argues that owning physical gold in vaults would protect the country's wealth from trouble in markets beyond the control of this small Alpine nation. The experience of the 2008 global financial crisis, triggered in part by complex investments that brought down multiple banks and bankrupted states, is fresh in people's memories.

Jacques Mayor, a Geneva accountant, said he was wary of the idea of Switzerland buying or selling gold in large amounts in international markets.

"The last time they sold gold, we had an enormous loss," Mayor said, referring to the central bank going

\$10 billion in the red in 2013, when the value of its gold holdings slumped.

Despite the perception that gold's value is protected by the fact it is a

has lost much of its sheen. Its price has fallen 11 percent since the summer to around \$1200 an ounce. Swiss polling firm gfs.bern has found the initiative is

ber. For investors, the vote is still too close for comfort. "Initial market reaction to a yes vote would be a sharply higher price — a \$50 dollar rise looks plausible," said Carsten Fritsch, commodity analyst at Commerzbank.

A greater impact may be felt over months, as global traders know the Swiss central bank will be a regular buyer. "It could provide the base for an upward trend in the years to come," said Fritsch. Until 1973, Switzerland was part of the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates and the value of the Swiss franc was defined in grams of gold. But the Swiss National Bank, or SNB, was criticized for holding excessive gold reserves that generated too little return. Moving away from this system allowed the bank to decide more freely how to invest its currency reserves. Fritz Zurbruegg, a member of SNB's governing board, notes the Swiss still hold a relatively large amount of gold in reserve. □



A person touches gold bars in the gold store of the Cantonal Bank of Zurich ZKB in Zurich, Switzerland. In Switzerland, a campaign is on to protect the country's wealth by investing in gold — a lot of gold. In a test of their sense of financial security, the Swiss are being asked to vote on a proposal to make the central bank hold a fifth of its reserves in gold within five years. That would mean buying 1,500 metric tons, or 1,650 short tons, of gold worth more than US\$60 billion.

(AP Photo/Keystone, Martin Ruetschi)

physical good, its market price can in fact be quite volatile. The metal is used often by speculators as a safe haven. Recently, gold

likely to fail, with just 38 percent supporting it, short of the required majority. About 47 percent were opposed as of early Novem-

Malaysia Airlines apologizes for tweet, posts loss

EILEEN NG
Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia Airlines on Friday said its loss widened last quarter and apologized for a promotional tweet slammed as insensitive after two deadly passenger jet disasters this year.

In its last public financial result before a planned privatization and overhaul, the flag carrier said its net loss in the July-September quarter rose 53 percent from a year earlier to 576.1 million ringgit (\$170.3 million).

The airline's business has suffered after a Malaysia Airlines jet with 239 people on board, mostly from China, went missing March 8 while en route to Beijing. No trace of it has been found. In July, a Malaysia Airlines jet was shot down over Ukraine, killing all 298 people on board.

As the airline's overhaul gathers pace, it said Friday it will continue to focus on

building revenue through aggressive marketing and promotions, and better capacity management.

know where?" It removed the tweet Friday, saying it was meant to inspire travelers but "unintentionally

competition asking people what activities and destinations are on their "bucket list." A bucket list is a



A Malaysia Airlines plane prepares to land at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) in Sepang, Malaysia, Friday, Nov. 28, 2014. Malaysia Airlines on Friday said its loss widened last quarter and apologized for a promotional tweet slammed as insensitive after two deadly passenger jet disasters this year.

(AP Photo/Vincent Thian)

However, its marketing strategy came under fire after the airline tweeted Thursday, "Want to go somewhere, but don't caused offence to some." It was not the first faux pas for the airline since the disasters. In September, it scrapped the title of a term used by some English-speakers to describe a list of adventures they want to have before they die. The airline said its quarterly

revenue fell 12 percent from a year earlier to 3.33 billion ringgit (\$976 million) amid poor market sentiment due to the double whammy of the disasters and intensified competition.

Declining fuel prices have helped stem losses but the airline said it continues to struggle as business in some markets, especially China, remains challenging.

The airline will be delisted and taken completely under the wing of the government by the end of the year under a \$1.8 billion overhaul by majority shareholder, state investment arm Khazanah Nasional.

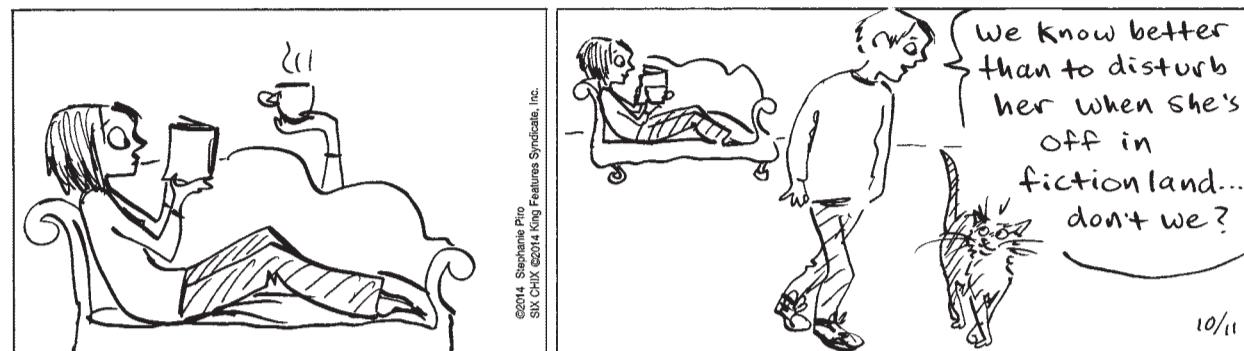
Under the revamp, Malaysia Airlines will cut 6,000 workers, which is 30 percent of its current workforce of 20,000.

Khazanah aims to restore Malaysia Airlines to profitability by the end of 2017 and then relist its shares on the stock exchange by the end of 2019. □

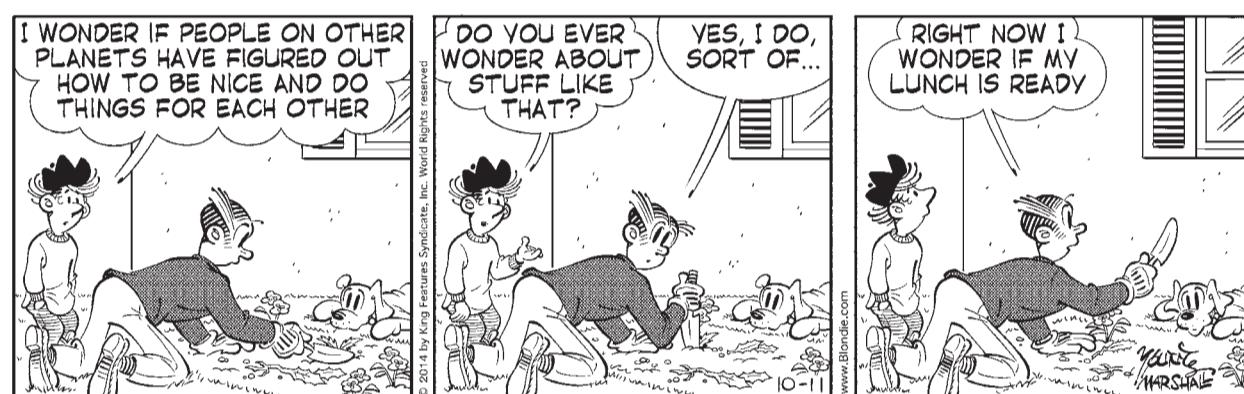
Mutts



6 Chix



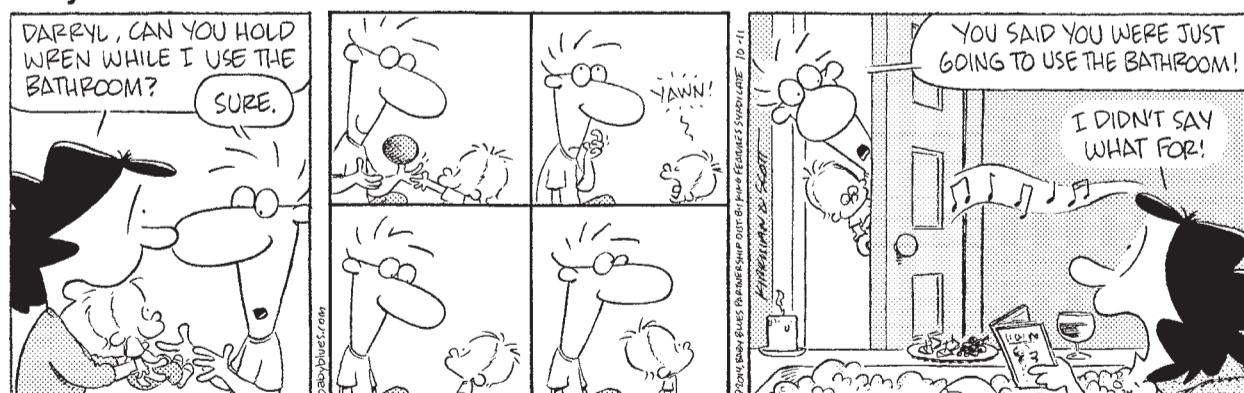
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

3	1	6	2		3
9		7			
7	3	9	4		
	4		8		
3	2	5	7		
		1			
8				9	
	6	9	2	4	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

10/11

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

2	6	3	1	5	7	8	4	9
5	7	9	4	8	6	2	3	1
8	1	4	9	3	2	6	7	5
4	3	2	7	9	5	1	6	8
9	8	6	2	1	4	3	5	7
7	5	1	3	6	8	4	9	2
6	2	8	5	4	9	7	1	3
3	4	5	8	7	1	9	2	6
1	9	7	6	2	3	5	8	4

Yesterday's puzzle answer

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16			
17					18					19			
20				21		22		23					
						24		25					
26	27	28			29			30		31	32	33	
34					35			36					
37				38		39		40					
41		42			43			44					
45					46			47					
51	52	53						54		55	56	57	
58					59	60			61				
62					63			64					
65					66			67					

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

10/11/14

Friday's Puzzle Solved

S	U	E	D	I	N	P	O	F	F	A
T	R	A	Y	M	O	U	S	P	I	L
O	G	R	E	P	I	N	E	A	P	P
P	E	T	O	U	S	T	R	O	M	E
H	E	N	R	Y		S	I	S		
S	O	L	A	C	E	M	E	N	T	
A	F	I	R	E	S	C	R	E	A	
M	A	N	S	T	O	E	D	A	T	
E	G	S	L	O	P	W	I	P	E	
E	S	C	H	E	W	T	E	N	O	
L	A	W	R	E	B	E	L			
S	T	O	O	D	S	I	N	S	I	T
H	O	U	S	E	B	O	N	D	A	T
A	D	Z	E	A	N	I	S	E	R	R
M	O	D	D	E	T	E	R	K	N	O

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10/11/14

3 Cheer
4 Junior naval officers
5 Water vapor
6 Songbird
7 Lung contents
8 Sent via USPS
9 Beg
10 Air bubble in the blood
11 Up; prepare
12 Powerful wind
13 Toboggan
21 Heat source
23 Actress Kathy
25 Excruciating
26 Snatches
27 Skin-numbing anesthetic
28 See eye;
agree
29 Music from Jamaica
31 Fatigued
32 Manual; computer guide
33 Tale
35 Last year's jrs.
36 as a beet

38 First stage
39 Understand
42 Tyrannize
44 Crowded together
46 "Beaver State"
47 Stitch
49 Hi in HI
50 Spend foolishly

51 Glasgow man
52 Melody
53 In the sack
54 Lucy's man
55 Etna output
56 out a living; got by
57 Hideaways
60 Big semi;

Profiles:

Continued from Page 10

He also said "they injured me six or seven times in my private parts."

The arrests of Wong and Shum appear to reflect Hong Kong authorities' attempts to sideline leaders of the movement amid increasing impatience from Beijing to shut down the protests that started in late September. Students and others have taken to the streets to oppose the Chinese central government's decision that a pro-Beijing committee must approve all candidates running in the territory's first direct election for leader, scheduled for 2017.

Wong played a key role in kick-starting those demonstrations when at a rally outside the government headquarters he spontaneously called on the crowd to storm a courtyard dubbed Civic Square. More than 100 people scaled a tall fence or pushed past a gate. Wong, Shum and other student leaders were arrested.

Public anger at the pair being held nearly the 48-hour legal limit without charge drove more people into the streets, where police responded by firing tear gas. That in turn boosted the protests that have come to be called the "Umbrella Movement," a reference to the umbrellas demonstrators used

as shields against pepper spray.

As the weeks have dragged on, the numbers of protesters camped out in the streets has dwindled, though barricades and tents remain in place at two other street encampments. The government held televised talks with student leaders — though Wong didn't participate — but offered little in the way of concessions and has made little attempt to respond to demands.

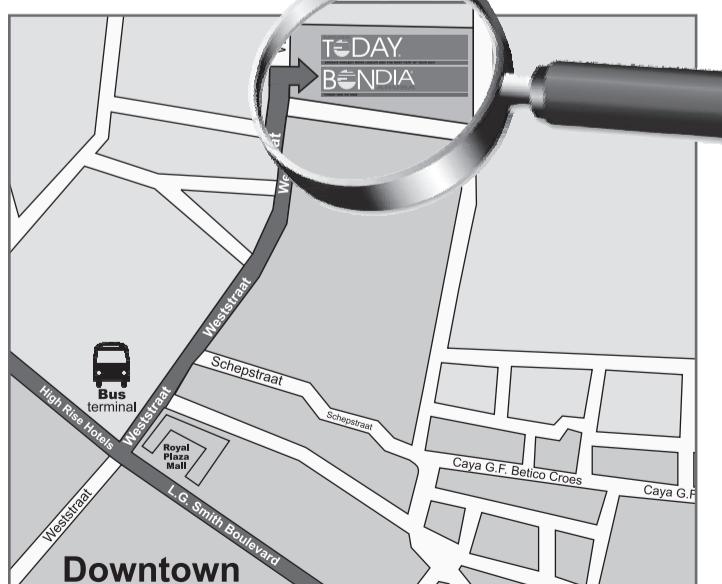
Wong was raised a Christian in a middle-class family that nurtured his concern for social issues, with his father reportedly taking him on visits to the city's less fortunate starting at the age of 6 or 7.

He graduated from a private Christian high school and this fall began going to the Open University of Hong Kong, having failed to get into the city's more prestigious institutions because of mediocre college entrance exam results. Wong first gained notoriety when in 2011 he started a group with some student friends called Scholarism to oppose the Hong Kong government's plan to introduce Beijing-style "moral and national education" curriculum into the territory's schools. Many residents viewed the move as an attempt to indoctrinate young people and inculcate support for the Communist government. After weeks of protests, authorities scrapped the plan. □

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Australia out of step with new climate momentum

ROD McGUIRK

Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)

— Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, who rose to power in large part by opposing a tax on greenhouse gas emissions, is finding his country isolated like never before on climate change as the U.S., China and other nations signal new momentum for action.

Abbott tried and failed to keep the issue off the agenda of the annual G-20 summit of wealthy and emerging countries that was hosted by the Australian city of Brisbane in mid-November. An agreement between Washington and Beijing to curb emissions, announced days before the summit, suggests he had misjudged the international mood on the issue. Next week, attention turns to the next round of international climate change negotiations in Lima, Peru. For a nation of just 23 million, Australia has played a significant role in past talks, but this time it's unclear what kind of role its delegation, led by Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, will play.

Abbott's conservative coalition won a landslide election victory last year over the Labor Party, which had grown unpopular in part because it had approved one of the world's highest taxes on major carbon gas polluters. Abbott not only ended that tax but years earlier helped scuttle an effort by his own Liberal Party to reach a bipartisan deal on a carbon-trading scheme, intended to encourage industries to produce less emissions.

G-20 heavyweights including the United States and Europe steamrolled Australia's efforts as summit host to keep climate change

off the agenda in Brisbane. In the end, the G-20 agreed to work together toward a global agreement on reducing carbon gas emissions at a major U.N. climate change conference in Paris in September 2015. The Lima meeting is the final high-level ministerial summit in which countries will aim to work toward a draft agreement to be presented in Paris. A European Union official described getting Australia to agree to the wording of a paragraph on climate

comes to thinking about and then acting on climate change" than Australia. "Here in Australia it means longer droughts, more wildfires. The incredible natural glory of the Great Barrier Reef is threatened," he said. Bishop said she was "surprised" by Obama's speech and later wrote to him, outlining Australian measures to protect the World Heritage-listed coral reef and assuring its preservation for generations to come. The Labor opposition described the gov-

not offered money to the fund, though it says some of its foreign aid budget is spent on climate change mitigation. Swedish Climate Ambassador Anna Lindstedt, who will be part of her country's delegation in Lima, said Australia's reluctance to contribute to the fund has created a "negative dynamic" in negotiations with large developing countries including China, who ask why they should be expected to contribute when Australia, one of the

next G-20 leaders' summit at Antalya in 2015.

"The biggest challenge to all humanity today is climate change," Davutoglu said. Abbott's staff later snubbed Davutoglu's request for a photograph of the two leaders together to represent the presidency of the G-20 changing hands. Abbott said after a recent meeting with French President Francois Hollande that it is "vital" that the Paris climate change conference succeeds. He added, "For it to be a success, we can't pursue environmental improvements at the expense of economic progress. We can't reduce emissions in ways which cost jobs."

Nic Stuart, a columnist for The Canberra Times, wrote this week that because of Abbott's doomed effort to keep climate change off the G-20 agenda, "a vital opportunity to jump-start his prime ministership with some international pizazz was squandered."

Abbott's popularity in opinion polling is at a record low for a first-term Australian prime minister. Key planks of his first budget, widely condemned as unfair to the poor, remain stalled in the Senate. Climate change was the issue that brought Abbott to the helm of his conservative Liberal Party in a leadership ballot of lawmakers by a single vote in 2009. His predecessor, Malcolm Turnbull, was deposed over his plans to support the then-ruling Labor Party's legislation to create an emissions trading scheme. Abbott is known for saying, also in 2009, that the "climate change argument is absolute crap." He later said the comment was "a little bit of rhetorical hyperbole." □



In this Nov 15, 2014 photo, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott addresses leaders including U.S. President Barack Obama, right, and British Prime Minister David Cameron, second right, during a plenary session of the G-20 summit in Brisbane, Australia.

Associated Press

change in the G-20 summit communique as slow-moving "trench warfare." In arguing for keeping climate change off the G-20 agenda, Australia said it was not strictly an economic issue and would distract from goals including a plan to boost global GDP by more than \$2 trillion over five years.

President Barack Obama miffed some in Abbott's administration when he said that among Asia-Pacific nations, "nobody has more at stake when it

ernment's response to the speech as petulant.

Obama also used his speech in Brisbane to pledge \$3 billion to the Green Climate Fund, a U.N. initiative set up to support developing nations dealing with rising seas, higher temperatures and extreme weather events.

A previous Australian Labor Party government played a leading role in establishing the fund, which has received close to \$10 billion in pledges from more than 20 countries. Australia has

richest countries per capita, won't.

"Their climate negotiators are still doing a very good job and trying to be as constructive as possible, but it is a challenge under the current circumstances," Lindstedt said. "Some emerging economies are in some ways more progressive than Australia."

On the sidelines of the Brisbane summit, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said global warming would be a top-agenda item when his country hosts the



This April 6, 2014 file photo shows Bob Baker, who founded The Bob Baker Marionette Theater, leading a parade as the Grand Marshall during the "Million Puppet March" in Santa Monica, Calif. Associated Press

Bob Baker, legendary puppeteer, dead at 90

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Bob Baker, the founder of one of America's oldest puppet theaters, died Friday at his home in Los Angeles. He was 90.

The cause of death was kidney failure, his biographer, Gregory Williams, said.

The Bob Baker Marionette Theater captivated children and adults with its ornate wooden puppets and props. The theater was a vestige of the days when marionettes were widely used on stage and television and playhouses dotted the streets of downtown Los Angeles.

"He really contributed to the continuation of puppetry as an art," Williams told The Associated Press on Friday. "With the digital age, it's going in a different direction. But people still come to it because it's an introduction to theater for young people. It's real-life 3D."

Baker discovered puppetry as a child and described being immediately transformed. "He couldn't talk about anything else when he came

home to his mother and he knew what he wanted to do," Williams said. At an early age, he began constructing his own puppets and performed. He worked in animation for Walt Disney and others before starting his own theater company with his partner, Alton Wood. Baker's credits included orchestrating marionette work on more than 250 films, such as "GI Blues" and "Escape from Witch Mountain."

In an interview with The Associated Press in 1997, Baker said it was important to teach people to use their imagination and believe in fantasy. He performed until he was 86 and began having physical difficulties. Williams said Baker lost both his family home and his theater to a mortgage lending company and that there were ongoing issues to be settled with his estate. The company has a lease on the theater house until March, at which point it will be extended month to month. "At this point we are continuing," Williams said. □

Fans go wild over 88-second 'Star Wars' teaser



In this image released by Disney, a scene is shown from the upcoming film, "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," expected in theaters on Dec. 18, 2015. Associated Press

The Associated Press

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, a helmetless storm trooper appeared in frame, panicked and sweaty in the middle of vast desert landscape, kicking off the first official look at "Star Wars: The Force Awakens."

After months of leaked images and idle speculation around director J.J. Abrams' film, Disney and Lucasfilm on Friday debuted an 88-second teaser trailer for the seventh entry into the blockbuster franchise online and in about 30 North American theaters. The dark, energetic teaser, which has been watched nearly 3 million times on YouTube, blasts viewers with quick, disjointed images of classic and slightly altered "Star Wars" images, like TIE Fighters, X-Wings,

droids and the Millennium Falcon.

Set to a new John Williams score, audiences get a peek at newcomers John Boyega (the storm trooper in question), Daisy Ridley, Oscar Isaac and a mysterious caped man in a frozen forest carrying a three-pronged light saber. Many assume the sinister, lumbering figure to be Adam Driver, who is rumored to be playing a villain in the highly secretive movie.

Andy Serkis is responsible for the haunting voiceover narration throughout the short spot, which previews a world 30 years after the events of "Return of the Jedi." Despite some negative reaction, overall, fans were not disappointed, even with the sobering knowledge that the actual film doesn't hit theaters till Dec. 18, 2015. □

"That 'Star Wars' trailer gave me the tingles," director Edgar Wright said on Twitter.

"Guardians of the Galaxy" director James Gunn also weighed in, writing, "Because everyone keeps asking me my opinion, I LOVED the Star Wars trailer. It infused me with a giddy-little-kidness."

Commenters on the long-standing "Star Wars" fan site TheForce.net were similarly delighted by the visuals, which seemed to pay homage to the grungy aesthetic of George Lucas's original trilogy.

There may have been no plot clues to be gleaned from the advertisement, but fan interest has certainly been piqued with the exciting array of images and the notable lack of original cast members Carrie Fisher, Mark Hamill and Harrison Ford. □

Doc rediscovers Bing Crosby's triumphs, tragedies

MIKE CIDONI LENNOX

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP)—An upcoming PBS documentary seeks to remind younger generations there was so much more to Bing Crosby than crooning "White Christmas" — from media master to philanthropist to difficult dad.

"It's an unprecedented career in the history of show business," says Robert Trachtenberg, director of "American Masters: Bing Crosby Rediscovered," debuting Tuesday. "He really was the first multimedia star of the 20th century."

Crosby established his name on radio and stage throughout the 1920s. By the early 1930s, he was a superstar and for more than two decades, placed at or near the top of record charts, radio ratings and movie box office.

He won an Academy Award as best actor for his performance in 1944's

"Going My Way." He received an honorary Grammy in 1963. His later career included a series of highly rated television specials, a format he helped to pioneer.

Then why does Crosby need rediscovering?

"Dad was a really under-the-radar guy," said his

daughter, actress Mary Crosby, in a recent interview. "So, when he died (in 1977 of a heart attack at age 74), we followed

troubled relationship with the children of that marriage. As the documentary tells it, both Crosby and his wife, actress Dixie Lee,

Crosby's death came the publication of son Gary Crosby's memoir "Going My Own Way," which claimed, "I'd get bent over



In this Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014 photo, Emmy Award-winning director, Robert Trachtenberg, left, and, Mary Crosby, daughter of legendary actor, Bing Crosby, pose during an interview in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

in those footsteps. And, of course, it took us about three decades to realize that we had really, really done him a disservice."

About midpoint, "Rediscovered" segues from Crosby's public to private life, and into an exploration of his excessive partying, tragic first marriage and

were alcoholics and while he managed the disease, she did not. She died after a battle with ovarian cancer at age 40.

Frequently on the road for work, Crosby wasn't around much for his family. But when he was present, he was by all accounts a strict father. Six years after

and my pants taken down and beat till I bled."

In the film, Mary Crosby recalls a tense post-publication lunch with her half brother, who, according to the actress, said he was goaded into exaggerating the facts to sell more books.

She was furious. But while

one of Gary Crosby's three brothers, Phillip Crosby, publicly refuted the severity of Gary Crosby's claim, Crosby's second wife, Kathryn Crosby and his second crop of children, including Mary Crosby, refused to address the allegations at the time.

"That was a huge, incredible mistake," Mary Crosby says in the film. "Because it's one of the things that people think of when his name comes up. Not this incredible legacy of good deeds and beautiful music, but, 'Oh, he's the guy who hit his kids.'"

In her recent interview, the 55-year-old actress said her dad learned from mistakes from his first marriage and first shot at parenthood, which informed his second time around. She recalled a father who was present, attentive and loving.

"He never laid a hand on me," she recalled. "It's important to get that out."

The documentary ultimately lets viewers draw their own conclusions about Bing Crosby's personal life. But the film's perspective on the Crosby's professional legacy is clear: He was a landmark entertainer, a technological maverick, a colleague who stood up for pals in need. □



U.S. actor Mickey Rourke celebrates his victory against his opponent Elliot Seymour of the United States, after their professional boxing match at the Luzhniki Stadium, Moscow, Friday, Nov. 28, 2014. Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Hollywood actor Mickey Rourke returned to the boxing ring Friday at the age of 62, defeating a fighter less than half his age in an exhibition

bout.

Rourke sent 29-year-old Pasadena native Elliot Seymour to the canvas twice in the second round before the referee stopped

Actor Mickey Rourke wins exhibition bout in Moscow

the fight.

The bout at a Moscow concert hall was Rourke's first fight in 20 years. He took a break from acting in the early 1990s, finishing a three-year pro boxing career with six wins and two draws. He hinted that the return to the ring has helped him cope with unspecified personal issues.

"I've got some things going on in my life so that (boxing has) sort of saved me from myself," Rourke told Russian TV. "And for a man like me, it's better to live in fear than go on in shame."

He has said he plans to hold another four fights in Russia.

Rourke prepared in a dressing room in front of a shrine featuring candles, images of saints, and photographs of his dogs. Rourke said he had been in mourning for his recently-deceased Chihuahua.

He took to the ring in a Stetson hat, a red-and-gold robe and shiny gold gloves, repeatedly crossing himself.

Rourke, who had said he lost 35 lbs (16 kilograms) to prepare to the fight, was much thinner than in his best-known cinematic fighting persona, when he bulked up to play the title character in 2008's "The Wrestler." His shorts

bore his ring nickname from the 1990s, Marielito, with a Spanish-language message reading "always handsome." The fight was held at a pedestrian pace, with both Rourke and Seymour frequently backing away from one another and letting down their guard. Several of Rourke's punches appeared illegal. His final punch struck the stumbling Seymour on the buttocks and the 29-year-old went down to all fours until the referee stopped the contest. The Russian crowd chanted "Misha," a short form of the Russian name Mikhail, in Rourke's honor. □

The Agency Moment



DAVID BROOKS
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George Eliot was an emotionally needy young woman. Throughout her 20s, she fell for a series of inappropriate and unavailable men, craving their affection. At one point, she got herself involved in a bizarre tangle with an editor and two other women. It was like a tragic farce as the women competed for his sympathy, complete with shifting alliances, slammed doors and storms of tears.

In 1852, at age 32, she fell in love with the philosopher Herbert Spencer, the only one of the men who was close to her intellectual equal. Spencer liked her company but could not overcome his own narcissism and her lack of beauty. In July that year, she wrote him a bold letter.

"Those who have known me best have already said that if ever I loved any one thoroughly, my whole life must turn upon that feeling, and I find they said truly," she declared. She asked him not to forsake her, "If you become attached to someone else, then I must die, but until then I could gather courage to work and make life valuable, if only I had you near me. I do not ask you to sacrifice anything - I would be very glad and cheerful and never annoy you."

Finally, she added a climactic flourish: "I suppose no woman ever before wrote such a letter as this - but I am not ashamed of it, for I am conscious in the light of reason and true refinement I am worthy of your respect and tenderness, whatever gross men or vulgar-minded women might think of me." Some biographers have said that letter represented a pivotal moment in Eliot's life, with its mixture of vulnerability and strong assertion. After the years of disjointed neediness, the iron was beginning to enter her soul and she was capable of that completely justified assertion of her own dignity. You might say that this moment was Eliot's agency moment, the moment when she stopped being blown about by her voids and weaknesses and began to live according to her own inner criteria, gradually developing a passionate and steady capacity to initiate action and drive her own life.

The letter didn't solve her problems. Spencer still rejected her. She remained insecure, especially about her writing. But her energies were roused. There was growing cohesion and, at times, amazing courage.

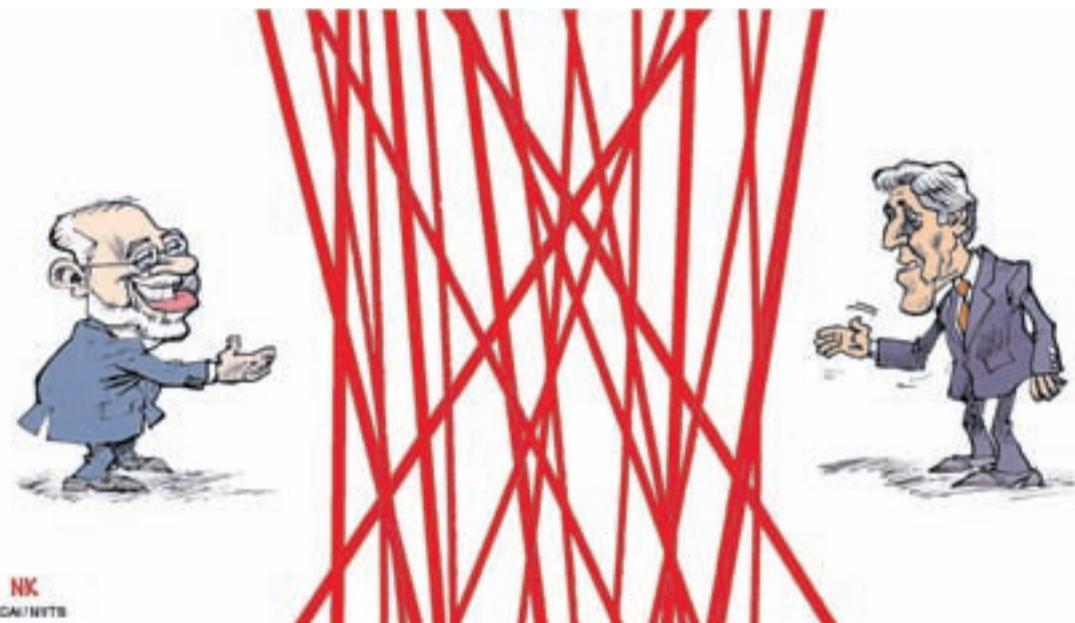
I've been thinking about moments of agency of this sort because often you see people who lack full agency. Sometimes you see lack of agency among the disadvantaged. Their lives can be so blown about by economic disruption, arbitrary bosses and general disorder that they lose faith in the idea that input leads to predictable output. You can offer job training programs, but they may not take full advantage because they don't have confidence they can control their own destinies.

Among the privileged, especially the privileged young, you see people who have been raised to be approval-seeking machines. They act active, busy and sleepless, but inside they often feel passive and not in control. Their lives are directed by other people's expectations, external criteria and definitions of success that don't actually fit them.

So many people are struggling for agency. They are searching for the solid criteria that will help them make their own judgments. They are hoping to light an inner fire that will fuel relentless action in the same direction.

I know an army officer who had a terrible commanding officer who only offered him negative feedback. He worked under this guy for 18 months, and whatever he did the feedback was the same. He had to come up with his own criteria to determine if he was doing well or poorly. He had to make decisions regardless of external affirmation or criticism. He discovered agency because external support was gone.

I once knew a guy who was batted about by people who should have supported him. For a time he took it, reacting painfully to each abuse. But finally he just got fed up. In a moment of indignation he lashed out. Every human soul is entitled to dignity and respect. He tasted agency in a flash of anger and an instant of revolt. I once read about a guy whose childhood was a steady calamity. He was afraid, unable to control his mind and self. But he became a writer and discovered he was magnificent at it. Through the act of writing, he could investigate his fears and demystify them. He discovered agency by finding something he was good at and organizing his life around that gift. Agency is not automatic. It has to be given birth to, with pushing and effort. It's not just the confidence and drive to act. It's having engraved inner criteria to guide action. The agency moment can happen at any age, or never. I guess that's when adulthood starts. □



Politicians, Teens and Birth Control



NICHOLAS KRISTOF
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Here's a story of utter irresponsibility: About one-third of American girls become pregnant as teenagers.

But it's not just a story of heedless girls and boys who don't take precautions. This is also a tale of national irresponsibility and political irresponsibility - of us as a country failing our kids by refusing to invest in comprehensive sex education and birth control because we, too, don't plan ahead.

I kind of understand how a teenage couple stuffed with hormones and enveloped in each other's arms could get carried away. But I'm just bewildered that American politicians, stuffed with sanctimony and enveloped in self-righteousness, don't adequately invest at home or abroad in birth-control programs that would save the government money, chip away at poverty, reduce abortions and empower young people.

Neither Democrats nor Republicans seem particularly interested in these investments. The inflation-adjusted sum spent on Title X family planning in the United States has fallen by two-thirds since 1980.

A few depressing facts:

- U.S. teenagers become pregnant at a rate of about one a minute.
- Some 82 percent of births to teenagers in the U.S. are unplanned.
- American and European teenagers seem to be sexually active at roughly similar rates, although Americans

may start a bit earlier. But the U.S. teenage birthrate is three times Spain's rate, five times France's, and 15 times Switzerland's.

- Young Americans show a lack of understanding of where babies come from. Among teenagers who unintentionally became pregnant, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that the most cited reason for not using contraception was "I didn't think I could become pregnant." And 18 percent of young men somehow believed that having sex standing up helps prevent pregnancy, according to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

Hello?

A teenager who has a baby often derails her own education and puts the child on a troubled trajectory as well. In Oklahoma last year, I met one family where the matriarch had a baby at 13, her daughter had a baby at 15, and that child, in turn, gave birth at 13. That's how poverty replicates. Medicaid spends an average of \$12,770 for a birth. Yet we spend only \$8 per teenage girl on programs to avoid pregnancy. In financial terms, that's nuts. In human terms, it's a tragedy.

Internationally, we and other donor countries also under-invest in family planning in poor countries. Globally, 220 million women don't want to become pregnant but lack access to contraception.

Isabel Sawhill of the Brookings Institution has written an important new book, "Generation Unbound: Drifting Into Sex and Parenthood Without Marriage." She notes that most young single moms in America don't intend to become pregnant but drift into it fatalistically, partly because they rely solely on condoms or other less reliable forms of birth control.

Condoms are 82 percent effective in preventing pregnancy in any one year, according to the CDC. But that means that after four years of relying only on condoms, most women will have become pregnant at least once.

So Sawhill advocates a move

to what she calls "childbearing by design, not by default." That means providing long-acting reversible contraceptives, or LARCs, to at-risk girls and young women who want them. LARCs are IUDs, or implants that can remain in place for years, and the failure rate is negligible.

Teenage birthrates in America have already dropped by more than half since 1991. But Sawhill calculates that if LARCs became much more widespread, the proportion of children born outside marriage could drop by a quarter, and the proportion of children who are poor would drop sharply as well.

"By turning drifters into planners, we would not only help those women achieve their own goals but also create much stronger starts for their children," Sawhill writes.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recently urged doctors to recommend LARCs for sexually active teenagers. One obstacle is the initial cost - \$500 to \$1,000 - so that many young people can't afford them.

A study in St. Louis offered free birth control, including LARCs, to sexually active teenagers and found that pregnancy rates for them plunged by more than three-quarters. Abortions fell by a similar rate. That's what we need nationwide.

The Affordable Care Act provides free access to all forms of contraception, which helps. But many pediatricians aren't trained in inserting LARCs.

So we need more women's health clinics, yet, instead, some are being closed as casualties of abortion wars. Moreover, states and schools should embrace comprehensive sex education, teaching contraception, the benefits of delaying sex and, also, the responsibility of boys.

A starting point for the United States should be to rebuild Title X spending on family planning. Surely we can afford to spend as much in this area as we did back in 1980.

So, of course, let's ask teenagers to show responsibility toward sex. But let's demand the same of our politicians. □



Shoppers line up outside a Best Buy in Dartmouth, Mass., early Friday, Nov. 28, 2014, on a rainy day while waiting for the store to open at 1 a.m.

(AP Photo/The Standard-Times, Peter Pereira)

BLACK FRIDAY Continued from Front

That might be hard to stomach for people worried about commercial encroachment on Thanksgiving. But it is good news for bargain-hunters who hate crowds.

Whether it's good news for retailers remains to be seen. Sales estimates for the start of the holiday shopping season will start trickling out later in the weekend.

Stores such as Wal-Mart and Target reported brisk Thanksgiving crowds. The colossal Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota, said it drew 100,000 people between 5 p.m. Thursday and 1 a.m. Friday, nearly what it draws over a typical full day.

On Friday, plenty of shoppers were out, but it wasn't elbow-to-elbow, said Moody's analyst Michael Zuccheri, at a mall in northern Connecticut.

"Traffic seems a little light," he said. "Stores being open last night takes away some of the early birds."

Brooklyn residents Paul and Mary Phillips shopped at Target, Old Navy and Marshalls on Friday at the Atlantic Terminal Mall in New York City. They picked DVD

box sets for \$5, marked down from \$45, and speakers for \$19, down from \$50. They didn't even have to wait in line.

"Because stores were open on Thursday, they're not as crowded now," Paul Phillips said.

There were scattered reports of shopper scuffles and arrests. In addition, protests were planned nationwide over minimum-wage laws and the grand

jury decision in Ferguson, Missouri.

Protesters interrupted holiday shopping at major stores around St. Louis to vent their anger over the decision not to indict the police officer who shot and killed Michael Brown.

At least 200 protesters gathered at the Galleria Mall in Richmond Heights, about 10 miles south of Ferguson. Several stores lowered their security doors or

locked outside entrances as protests sprawled onto the floor while chanting, "Stop shopping and join the movement."

In Chicago, about 200 people demonstrated in a plaza near the historic water tower along Michigan Avenue, calling on people to boycott Black Friday shopping to show their solidarity with protesters in Ferguson.

Other disruptions: Best Buy's

website went down on Friday morning for about an hour. Spokesman Jeff Shelman said "a concentrated spike in mobile traffic" prompted the company to temporarily shut down the site. Online monitoring firm Dynatrace said Cabela's, Foot Locker and J.C. Penney also had website problems.

Online shopping, especially on phones and tablets, may be siphoning off some shoppers from the malls.

IBM, which tracks online sales, said they rose 8 percent compared with Black Friday last year as of 3 p.m. E.T., with much-increased shopping on mobile devices.

In the stores, Toys R Us and Target executives said shoppers seem to be buying more than just the doorbusters and are filling their carts with items not on sale. That's a sign that lower gas prices and an improving job picture are making shoppers more confident about opening their wallets.

At clothing stores, discounts were steep, with Old Navy offering up to half off everything. Best Buy offered \$100 off some iPads. And Target slashed prices on TVs and video game consoles. □



Customers wrap up their holiday shopping during Walmart's Black Friday events on Thursday, Nov. 27, 2014 in Bentonville, Ark. Deep savings continue at Walmart Friday through Cyber Monday as part of five days of events in stores and online.

(Gunnar Rathbun/AP Images)